The quest for collaborative ministry: an investigation into an elusive practice in the Church in Wales

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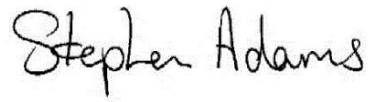
"The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit."



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Abstract

Over at least fifty years, the Church in Wales (in common with the Church of England) has repeatedly called for the establishment of collaborative ministry (between clergy and between clergy and laity) both as a theological necessity and to respond to changing patterns of parochial organisation. The need to make these repeated exhortations implies that implementation has been at best patchy. My own experience, together with an Appreciative Inquiry approach to interviews with nine experienced clergy indicates that the culture of the institution is problematic concerning collaborative practices – particularly about the exercise of power. Using Pierre Bourdieu's reflexive sociology, I locate my participants' narratives within the framework of their habitus, the field of the Church in Wales, and the symbolic capital of individuals and groups. I argue that the Church in Wales defaults to unhelpful hierarchical or managerial notions of ministry and mission that too often set clergy and laity at odds with one another. I examine practices of teamwork that create inclusion, psychological safety, and that are grounded in social models of the Trinity. Such appropriation, in my assessment, establishes the groundwork for effective collaborative practice and underpins the human flourishing that is at the heart of the gospel.

Summary of Portfolio

The portfolio of work leading up to this thesis charts the development of my thinking and research. Before starting the DProf programme, I began with questions concerning the mission and ministry of the Church in Wales. I was a ministry development officer based at St Michael's College Cardiff and responsible for in-service training programmes for clergy across Wales. I desired to provide training that would better equip clergy for mission and ministry in contemporary Wales

In my literature review, I was concerned to explore the history of Wales and Christianity in Wales in the twentieth century to gain some perspective on the Church in Wales's contemporary situation. With that, I engaged with issues of Welsh language, culture and identity together with an exploration of the secularisation thesis. Alongside this, I revisited some earlier study in practical theology and the sort of hermeneutic approach I was drawn to.

For my publishable article, I began to examine questions about collaborative ministry as this was being discussed with more and more regularity at meetings of Church in Wales ministry officers. I remembered from my time in ministerial training in the mid-1980s that the Tiller report had then just been published – much of it focussing on this very subject. The further research I did showed a periodic reworking of the same theme over the course of decades. In the paper, I also set out some tentative exploration into Appreciative Inquiry as a method of developing collaborative ministry in churches.

By the time I came to write my reflective practice paper, the Church in Wales was going through a period of review of its life and of training institutions like St Michaels. Using a metaphor of cycling through the landscape around Trawsfynydd and of being 'in' the landscape rather than driving through it at high speed, I took time to reflect on my personal history and what was happening to St Michael's. From there I turned to reflect on the hermeneutic and theological tools I could use to make sense of what was proving to be a difficult situation.

The ethics submission proved useful in thinking through the issues of confidentiality permissions etc., and that then led into my research proposal. By now, I had more

experience with using Appreciative Inquiry and determined that it could be used effectively to interview clergy. My desire to explore the theme of collaborative ministry grew from the earlier research I had done and the realisation that clergy were often struggling when they were told they had to be more collaborative. Could I help them in positive and practical ways? Listening to their stories seemed to be a good place to start. Thus, my thesis has progressed from more general notions of mission and ministry in the Church in Wales to seeking to make sense of clergy experience around issues of collaborative ministry. From that I wanted to offer practical ways forward.

1 Introduction

> To be sure, a staggering amount of intense collaboration between theologians, ministers and laity is absolutely necessary in order to enable the Church and its membership to speak with a new voice and act with new vigour and vision at the present day. (Kraemer, 1958, p. 187)

1.1 What this thesis is about

In this thesis, I will argue for the practice of collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales as something essential to its life and purpose – a practice that arises out of New Testament insights about relationships in the Church and the mission God has entrusted to it. At first sight, this appears to be something obvious, hardly needing any research. As Stephen Pickard writes in his volume *Theological Foundations for Collaborative Ministry, "*Ought not a collaborative approach be one of the first things we learn in ministry whether lay or ordained? Ought not this way of ministering together be second nature in the body of Christ?" (Pickard, 2009, p. 1) Pickard proceeds to state that the experience of more than three decades of ministry taught him that the above questions arise from the assumption that "collaborative ministry is not rocket science" (p. 1). My experience of ministry, also extending over more than thirty years, has exposed to me the fragility of that assumption, and I now appreciate that it cannot bear the weight of reality.

A 360-degree ministerial review process I undertook in 2005, revealed to me that I had "a tendency to control freakery." That stung! I had thought that I was quite good at the enabling, co-operative style of ministry that parish priests are supposed to exercise. I had selected the commentator (one of eight) as someone whose opinion I valued. Reflecting on this comment with a close friend helped me to recognise that I did have this tendency, despite my good intentions. My subsequent observations of clergy colleagues, of principal lay officers and the congregations they serve, as well as senior diocesan staff, confirms that I am not alone in struggling with the practice of collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales. Before

reflecting further on the nature of collaborative ministry, however, I will introduce the Church in Wales and consider why this is such an essential issue for its future.

1.2 The Church in Wales

1.2.1 What is it?

In 1920 the four Church of England dioceses in Wales were disestablished and disendowed and became the separate Anglican province of the Church in Wales. No longer governed by the state's legal framework, the new constitution came into effect to define the process of governance (D. D. Morgan, 2011, p. 80). Jones (2000) states that "the whole purpose of the Welsh Church Act and Disestablishment was to reconstitute the Church in Wales as a voluntary association of its members, in the same position as other Welsh churches" (p. 55). The Constitution defines the Church in Wales in the following fashion:

> The Church in Wales is a fellowship of dioceses within the Holy Catholic Church, constituted as a Province of the Anglican Communion. It maintains the threefold order of bishops, priests and deacons which it has received, and acknowledges as its supreme authority in matters of faith the Holy Scriptures as interpreted in the Catholic Creeds and the historic Anglican formularies, that is, the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons as published in 1662. Its calling is to nurture men and women in the faith of Jesus Christ and to aid them to grow in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, so that the good news of God's grace may be clearly proclaimed in the world and that God's Kingdom may be honoured and advanced. (Church in Wales, 2016b)

Additionally, in relation to Wales, it declares itself to be "the ancient Church of this land, catholic and reformed"(Church in Wales, 1984). It has also been described as a disestablished Church maintaining many features of establishment (Brown, 1993, 1999; Taylor, 2003). With regard to marriage and burial rights, there are still vestiges of establishment attached to the Church in Wales, leading Doe (2002) to suggest that "quasi-established" is a better description, at least in these two areas (p. 11).

1.2.2 A Welsh religious institution

Following disestablishment, two additional dioceses were carved out of St Davids and Llandaff: Monmouth in 1921 and Swansea and Brecon in 1923. Morgan (2011) characterises the early years of the new province as a process of adjustment and maturing into its newly found independence following the bitterness of the disestablishment campaign. There was, too, the essential job of securing the finances after disendowment (pp. 80-82). Jones (2000), notes the importance of the context of the period before and after disestablishment for understanding the Constitution. First, the church did not (by and large) seek to be disestablished, and to many in the church, it felt like an imposition that they were reluctant to accept. Second, there was a fear that the four dioceses would split from one another, and third, there existed a "desire to preserve continuity" with the church's Anglican past (p. 28).

Twenty-five years later, Morgan (2011) argues, the church had grown in confidence to a surprising degree, and there was a "progressive catholicization" of the church in progress (p. 87). This sense of confidence, allied to a closer connection to the Welsh language[1] and a concern for economic and social issues, would broaden the appeal of Anglicanism in Wales through the 1930s up until the early 1960s (pp. 181-187, 209-212). Nevertheless, Morgan notes that this Anglican growth was often at the expense of Nonconformity, which appeared restrictive and dour to many (p. 210). Even at the highpoint of Nonconformist membership in the mid-1920s, some in Nonconformity were expressing concern about weaker Sunday Schools and far fewer 'Listeners'[2] (p. 162, 172). The numerical decline of all the traditional

[1] The Church in Wales is officially a bilingual church. For instance, the Constitution states that "The English and Welsh versions of the Constitution shall have equal validity" (Church in Wales, e, pt. 1 (2)) and official liturgies are published in both languages. The report *Pob un yn ei iaith ei hun – Each in our own language* (Church in Wales, 2011b) noted the church's "honourable history" of safeguarding the right to worship in "'the language of the heart'" (p. 7,2.7). Nevertheless, it also expressed concern at the lack of vocations from Welsh speakers and appointments where fluency in Welsh was not considered. The authors also reported a widespread assumption that "everybody understands English" (p. 11, 4.5) and several examples showing where the church is not adhering to its own language policy (p. 15, 6.5-6).

[2] *Grandawyr* or Listeners were not official members of chapels but regularly attended services (D. D. Morgan, 2011, p. 23)

churches in Wales, albeit at different rates, has been one of the highly significant changes in Welsh society over the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

For the Church in Wales, Morgan (2011) characterises the period from 1962-1979 as "Uncharted waters" (p. 220), noting the progress of secularisation[3], theological turbulence reflecting the *Honest to God* (Robinson, 1963) debate that extended across Britain[4], the churches' positive and proactive response to the Aberfan disaster (1966), and both "a faltering ecumenism and a renewed evangelicalism" (p. 243). However, two noteworthy Welsh Anglican bishops nearly forty years apart discerned the worrying signs that were becoming apparent in their day. Timothy Rees, in 1934, wrote of the problem of the "dead weight of sheer indifference" to spiritual things in the Churches (D. D. Morgan, 2011, p. 93) and on the fiftieth anniversary of disestablishment in 1970, Glyn Simon reflected that "[t]here exists a great spiritual vacuum in Wales … The Church in Wales stands today in Ezekiel's valley of dry bones …" (O. W. Jones, 1981, p. 131). Decline and indifference were the two features that would perplex and confound successive generations in Welsh Churches.

In 1979 the massive defeat of the devolution referendum and the Conservative victory in the general election making Margaret Thatcher Prime Minister had a profound and lasting impact on Wales' political and cultural life. The high degree of opposition to devolution in 1979 was a surprise and not turned around (and then by only a small margin) until a new referendum in 1997. As a consequence, the New National Assembly was established in 1999. Twenty years on the Welsh Government and Assembly are still a subject of debate with the social and political implications of devolution always in flux. The years of Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher's premiership resulted in the closure of coal mines,

[3] The secularisation thesis is a highly contested notion. Warner (2010), in his critique, argues that, "secularization theory can itself be interpreted as a totalizing, enlightenment meta-narrative, as coercive as Christendom" (Chapter 2.1, para. 1). Chambers (2005) in his volume *Religion, Secularization and Social Change in Wales*, argues that while "[i]t would be foolish to deny secularization as an event" the same phenomena can be interpreted in a variety of ways (p. 36). Later, he developed his thesis to assert that "… religious decline in the twentieth century has been a by-product of Wales-specific cultural and economic factors, with links to the secularization theory being tenuous at best" (Chambers, 2012, p. 221).

[4] See, for example, Glyn Simon's second visitation charge (Simon, 1966, p. 41)

steelworks and most of the heavy industries that had been a prominent feature of South Wales in particular. Post-industrial Wales is a very different place from its industrial past with many lingering social issues resulting from the change. Morgan (2011) notes that for the churches post-1979, "on the macro-level institutional decline continued very much as before, yet on the micro-level signs of hope were persistently visible" (p. 275).[5] He also observes that many of the older Welsh voluntary institutions were suffering from the same sort of decline. As Chambers (2005, p. 221) states, there are cultural and economic factors at work, not just the religious ones.

Morgan (2001) sums up the situation as the new millennium arrived:

> What had become incontrovertible by the 1980s, even if it was covertly true long before, was that there was not one single and specific Welsh identity but many, the validity of which did not depend on stereotypes concerning social class, locality, language or religious affiliation but on a shared experience of life in a late twentieth-century pluralist Wales. (p. 158)

This situation persists into the present, and the question remains about the precise nature of the shared experience of life in a pluralist Wales[6].

1.3 Situating myself within the context

I was born in Swansea and lived for my first ten years in Haverfordwest and subsequently in Morriston just to the north of Swansea. Consequently, from family background, early life and education, I identify as Welsh. Following university at Exeter (Geology BSc) and then marriage, I lived and worked in West London. I offered for ordination through my home diocese of Swansea and Brecon, and after two years of training at Salisbury and Wells Theological College, I was ordained deacon in Brecon Cathedral in 1987 and priest in 1988.

[5] I return to the subject of institutional decline in chapter 5 when I look more closely at some of the structural factors affecting the Church in Wales.
[6] See, for example, the discussion in the collection of essays edited by Aaron & Williams (2005) or Johnes (2013) – especially Chapter 14.

As a curate, I served initially at St Nicholas Townhill, a large 1920s council estate overlooking the city of Swansea. From there I went on to serve a curacy in the parish of Llwynderw, situated in the Mayals overlooking Swansea Bay. The contrast of the leafy, suburban Clyne valley and the social deprivation of Townhill was a significant learning experience.

After nearly four years as a curate, I left Wales to take up a post in Northamptonshire in the Diocese of Peterborough. For six years I served as vicar of a group of five rural parishes south of Daventry and the following eight years as rector of a large suburban parish in Northampton town. In 2006, I returned to the Church in Wales to take up the post of Dean of Ministry Development at St Michael's College, Llandaff. There I worked with the ministry officers of the six dioceses to develop and provide a Provincial training programme of Initial Ministerial Education (IME) for curates and Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) for clergy of incumbent status. In addition, I organised and facilitated the annual Provincial Reader Conference and arranged and monitored parish and chaplaincy placements for ordinands in training. In September 2015, I returned to parish ministry with my appointment as Rector of Cowbridge situated west of Cardiff in the Vale of Glamorgan. The parish is a Rectorial Benefice (effectively a Ministry Area[7]) comprising twelve churches, a team of two full-time priests and a curate, students in training, a full-time parish administrator, and the assistance of several retired clergy.

Thus, the professional experience I draw upon in this thesis includes significant rural and urban parish ministry in both Wales and England. I have worked alone and in teams and now lead a team in my present post. Alongside this, I have substantial experience of the formation of those preparing for lay ministry and ordination as well as of post-ordination development from curacy through to retirement. My experience since returning to Wales has brought me into contact with a wide range of clergy and laity in each of the six dioceses. Further, since 2007, I have been

[7] See Appendix A for an explanation of Church in Wales terms

learning Welsh and now regard the language as a valuable part of my Welsh identity and spirituality.

It is out of this experience that my questions about collaborative ministry surfaced. Since ordination training at Salisbury, I have held to a representative view of the ordained priesthood – it exists to activate or enable the priesthood of the whole church which is a "participation in Christ's ministry" (Macquarrie, 1972, p. 85). As Robin Greenwood expresses it, the priest is "inseparably interconnected with the life of the whole of the baptized church membership … It is the entire church rather than the priest alone who is said to represent Christ" (Greenwood, 1994, p. 141,145). Thus, working alongside, enabling, teaching, and encouraging have been some of the watchwords and aims of my practice of ministry even if, at times, I have fallen into "control freakery" (1.1 above).

The issue of collaboration became critical for me following the publication of the so-called Harries report (Harries, Handy, & Peattie, 2012). The Bench of Bishops commissioned this review of the Church in Wales following the September 2010 meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of the Church in Wales. Anticipating the centenary of disestablishment in 2020 and conscious of the decline in church attendance, GB reflected that "[t]he Church in Wales cannot go on doing the same things in the same way" (para. 1).

The authors of the report noted that the Church in Wales, as a disestablished church, has the freedom to instigate changes in its life and structures (p. 3). Nevertheless, they considered that the church has a "structure and organisation appropriate to an established church 100 years or so ago … [and that] the parish system … was designed for an age crucially different from our own" (p. 3). However, they cited little evidence of the failure of the parish system and what analysis there is, reveals a priest-centred conception of the church:

> The parish system, as originally set up, with a single priest serving a small community is no longer sustainable. It was put in place when people lived and worked in the same parish, … All this has changed.

> At the moment priests are having to serve three, four or as many as ten parishes, with all the extra attendance at meetings and administration this involves, … A radical change of perspective is needed: from parish to a much larger area, and from a single priest, to a team with different gifts. (Harries et al., 2012, p. 6, sec. 6, para. 1,2)

Greenwood (2009) describes this type of approach as committing the error of "substituting the work of the parish priest for that of the entire church" (p. 87). Rather than starting with questions about the nature of the Christian community, the Body of Christ, and an incarnational notion of the parish (Church in Wales, d, Chapter 1, sec. 1), it starts with what is possible for a priest (or team of priests) to manage[8]. Thus, the way is opened up for the recommendation to cluster parishes into more manageable Ministry Areas[9] (Harries et al., 2012, pp. 6–7). After making a passing reference to the concept of *koinonia*[10] in the earlier part of the report, the authors envisage collaborative ministry as the key to accessing "the common life of the Christian community" (p. 3, 4).

I had two main observations concerning the report. The first was about the rapid turn to structural solutions in the document. What would prevent us from unconsciously transposing old habits and practices into the new structures? Would there not be a danger of outwardly changing everything but for nothing to be different? Second, and related to the first question, the promise of collaborative ministry (wrapped up in notions of *koinonia*) was offered as the model of cultural change in switching to the new structure. Had I not heard this before? At the time of my training at Salisbury (1985-1987), the talk (at least in the Church of England) was of the recently published and "radical" report, *A Strategy for the Church's Ministry* (Tiller, 1983) and its call for collaborative styles of ministry. These questions prompted my initial research into the background of collaborative

[8] This echoes the observation of Kraemer (1958) that "nearly all expositions on the Church are magnetically attracted to the treatment of the place and function of the ordained ministry …" (p. 161).

[9] Subsequently entitled Mission Areas in the diocese of St Asaph

[10] "… which is at once the common life of the Christian community and the Divine Life shared with us in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Harries et al., 2012, p. 3)

ministry and the subsequent realisation that it seems to have been 'rediscovered' with some regularity over, at a minimum, the last fifty years.

1.4 A short history of the call to collaborative ministry[11]

Canon John Tiller, who was Chief Secretary of the Church of England's Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (ACCM), was asked by ACCM to produce a document in time for a debate in General Synod in November 1983. In the ensuing report, he made a brief survey of the social changes of his time before turning, first, to "The ministry of the whole people of God" (p. 59) and only then, and second, to "Particular kinds of ministry" (p. 89). The "particular kinds" included the ministry of bishops, priests and deacons as well as that of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) (p. 118) and what he termed "a local eldership" (p. 118). Thus, ministry was grounded in baptism and participation in the Body of Christ.

Nevertheless, Tiller drew attention to the present reality and what was needed to effect change:

> 'We are still dominated by the false view that the ministry of the Church is confined to bishops, priests and deacons. The whole pilgrim people of God share in ministry, and clergy and laity must be trained for this shared ministry.' (p. 65)

First, Tiller urged, there is to be training for lay ministry; training which itself arises out of Christian education, the aim of which is "wholeness in Christ, with all that implies both for personal maturity and for living in community" (Tiller, 1983, p. 145). Second, there is training for ordained ministry via a style which "place[s] much greater emphasis upon team ministry … [and] therefore requires a community in which the norms are corporate decision-making, shared responsibilities and joint action" (p. 150). Furthermore, the teaching of such educational programmes "should be done on a collaborative basis … because the method of teaching will be highly formative for the style of ministry which results" (p. 150).

[11] In this section I reference a number of Church of England reports and documents because their influence often extends across the border – not least due the fact that a significant number of Church in Wales clergy have trained in England. Additionally, the Church of England's greater size often means that they have the resources to produce such reports.

Tiller also identified the areas where the practice of shared ministry should be essential:

- Collaboration between ministers
- Collaboration in leadership
- Collaboration between Local Churches
- Collaboration in Mission (p. 68-70)

In drawing up his document, Tiller was conscious of the immediately previous official report on the Church of England's ministry by Leslie Paul (1964). Paul's report had focused mostly on the deployment and payment of clergy, and Tiller accurately notes the difference in their conceptual frameworks: "… the whole people of God provides the foreground to my work, whereas for Leslie Paul it was only the background to a debate about the clergy" (Tiller, 1983, p. 3).

For the Church in Wales, what is of interest here is the comparable work of a Commission appointed by the Bishop of Llandaff, Glyn Simon, sometime before his second visitation charge early in 1966 (Simon, 1966, p. 34). In the library of St Michael's College in Llandaff[12], the copy of Leslie Paul's 1964 report bears the inscription "*ex libris* Glyn Simon", and we can surmise that his reading of the Paul report spurred Simon to initiate a Llandaff version. However, the thrust of the Llandaff report is far closer to Tiller than it is to Paul in its emphasis as well as in its framing of the issues to be addressed.

Simon presented the commission with five questions as terms of reference. The first of these questions, with its response, set the tone for the remainder of the document: "What is the priest's work today and what is the function of the laity?" (Diocese of Llandaff, 1968, p. 7). However, before setting out on their task of tackling the bishop's question, the authors felt the need to "get clear in [their] minds just what the Church is, its nature and function" (p. 7). Here they turned to a theology of the Church whereby the whole Church is called to be a "People", to be

[12] In the year 2014.

a “Servant” of God and world, and to be “Priest … represent[ing] the world to God and God to the world” (p. 9-10). The emphasis was such that:

> It is the whole Church which embodies Christ to the world, thus it is the function of every Christian as a member of the priestly Body to bear Christ to the world, to witness to the Person of Christ in his life. (p. 13)

Reasoning in this way, the authors argued for a priesthood representative of the priesthood of the whole church (pp. 10-12), ministering in partnership with an educated laity (p. 16). The aim of this partnership would be engagement in God’s mission, as service to the world (p. 10f). And it is a mission which “is central to theology because it springs out of the character of God. It is not the consequence of a command, but the outgoing expression of a divine love”. The report also expressed the Commission’s hopes for a sea change in the culture of the church:

> The ideal in any parish, as we see it, is that the clergy and laity should see each other and work together as partners, rather than that church work should be regarded as the concern of the clergy, with the help of as many of their parishioners as are inclined to, or may be prevailed upon to give it. (p. 35)

Thus, the Commission’s conclusions can be seen as taking up thinking about ministry and the laity that were expressed in, for example, Vatican II documents (Lumen Gentium, 1964, Chapter 4) and popular volumes like *God’s Frozen People* (Gibbs & Morton, 1964, pp. 9–21) as well as anticipating the commentary on those same themes in the “Lima Text” on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (World Council of Churches, 1982).

Nevertheless, in 1999, a new report by Harris & Startup (1999), this time of a significant sociological survey of the Church in Wales, showed that little had changed over the intervening thirty-one years.

> A further problem is that most participants conspire in the preservation of a conventional hierarchical distinction between clergy and laity. Clergy attitudes fail to promote a sharing of the whole ministry of the church,

> both pastoral and evangelistic, between clergy and laity; on the other hand, many of the laity identify the clergy with the Church (p. 199)

The fears of the authors of the earlier commission had, it seems, come substantially true; namely, that their report would, ultimately, "serve no better purpose … than to occupy bookshelf space!" (Diocese of Llandaff, 1968, p. 31)

In both the Church of England and the Church in Wales a series of subsequent reports claimed the same theological ground concerning the fundamental nature of collaborative or shared ministry and urged the church to establish collaborative practices as a matter of urgency. *Stranger in the Wings,* a 1998 Church of England report on Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry (LNSM) saw partnership in ministry as a "fundamental vocation arising from … baptism". (Church of England, 1998, p. 27). In its discussion of collaborative practice, *Ar Daith - On a Journey* (Church in Wales, 2002), envisaged Welsh ministers as being "not the centre of the church, but companions to the church ..." (p. 11). The 'Hind Report' of 2003[13], like Tiller twenty years before, proposed that "methods of training should be suitable to encourage a disposition towards collaboration and to equip [ordination] candidates with the skills needed for it." (Archbishops Council, 2003, p. 27f). The follow-up report to Hind, *Shaping the Future,* specified learning outcomes for ministry so that those taking up the oversight of a parish would be expected to "Demonstrate effective collaborative leadership and the ability to exercise this in a position of responsibility" (Archbishops Council, 2005, p. 70). The Faith and Order Advisory Group of the Church of England, tasked with exploring the nature of ministry for a church focussed on mission concluded that:

> Ministries are complementary; they enrich and support … each other within the divine economy and should, therefore, be carried out in a collaborative way. You cannot 'go solo' in ministry or act as though 'I have

[13] The Hind report, "Formation for ministry within a learning Church" and its follow-up "Shaping the future" (Archbishops Council, 2003, 2005) had a major influence over the Church in Wales – the learning outcomes it defined were very lightly amended to reflect the Welsh context, approved by the Bench of Bishops, and used by St Michael's College in the training of Ordinands and Readers.

> no need of you' (1 Corinthians 12.21). (The Faith and Order Advisory Group, 2007, p. 147)

Similarly, in 2011 in the Church in Wales, a discussion document produced by ministry officers from the six dioceses sought to appropriate and develop the thinking of the recent Church of England reports for the Welsh context and concluded that:

> If the call to ministry brings together people of diverse gifts and understanding, formation in the high-level skills of teamwork and collaboration needs to be an important and continuing element of training for all types of ministry and at all stages of ministerial development. (Church in Wales, 2011a, p. 9)

This reflection, in turn, was reiterated in the Harries review of 2012:

> What is needed is a new, more collaborative, style of leadership, modelled by the Bishops and reflected at parish level. (Harries et al., 2012, p. 4)

Addressing the recommendations of this review, the then Archbishop, in his Presidential Address to the Governing Body in April 2013, further emphasised the need for this style of ministry:

> So the future is about a collaborative team of clergy and laity, in a ministry area with an experienced team leader, being trained together, so that the Gospel is proclaimed and lived. (B. Morgan, 2013)

What the above church reports indicate is that there is not too much difficulty in articulating a compelling theological rationale for collaborative practices in the church. However, the fact is that fifty-one years on from the report of the Llandaff Commission and thirty-six years after Tiller, collaborative practice is still something anticipated for the future (Archbishop's 2013 presidential address, cited above). If collaborative practice were in place, we would not need the continuing rhetoric and exhortation. Even the argument that the existing generation of clergy have not been trained in the practice and we need to raise a new generation who are

habituated to it looks thin when the maximum pensionable service of a stipendiary Church in Wales cleric is forty years.

So far in this section, I have focussed on official reports and documents of the Church in Wales and the Church of England. In addition to these, there have been notable contributions from Robin Greenwood in a range of works from 1994 to 2013 (e.g. Greenwood, 1994, 2002, 2009, 2013). In each, he has made a convincing theological argument for collaborative practice as fundamental to the church's very being. Much of it is in the same vein as the Llandaff Commission's 1968 and Tiller's 1983 reports but adding a considerable degree of reflection from "analogical 'social' Trinitarian" writings of recent decades (Greenwood, 2013, Chapter 7 sec. The influence ... Trinitarian experience of God). As Ministry Officer of the Church in Wales at the time, Greenwood was also the principal instigator of the report, *Ar Daith (2002)* cited above.

In addition to Greenwood, Stephen Pickard has made a significant contribution to the discussion on collaborative ministry within Anglicanism with his *Theological Foundations for Collaborative Ministry* (Pickard, 2009). I will follow up on his engagement with the legacy of RC Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood* (Moberly, 1910) in chapter four when I discuss the after-effects of structures and attitudes set into the constitution at the time of disestablishment. For now, I want to note how Pickard (2010, 2012a) extended the usefulness of his 2009 volume by proposing seven critical moves that he sees as essential to the establishment of collaborative ministry in the church. Each of the movements connects to the others and involves a turn:

- "From Fragmentation to Integration" (Pickard, 2012a, p. 34).

  For Pickard, the ancient divide into 'clergy' and 'laity' is exacerbated by the professionalisation of the clergy[14]. Also, he sees that the influence in the Church of the western culture of individualism has led to an increasing

[14] David Heywood (2011) also makes a convincing argument that the professionalisation of ministry is not necessarily a good thing in terms of relations between clergy and laity within the church.

diversity of ministries (arguably notions of every-member ministry contribute to this).

- "From Mechanistic to Organic Theory and Practice" (p. 42).

  Here Pickard has in mind the twin-track theory of ministry he finds in Moberly (1910); one track derives from a historically questionable and mechanistic account of apostolic succession and the other from the organic metaphor of the Body of Christ. As stated above, this will be explored more fully in chapter four.

- "From Competition to Cooperation" (p. 44).

  Pickard notes the way competition is deeply encoded in our Western culture and reflects that "Where competition rather than cooperation dominates the scene it is axiomatic that power will be skewed in unhealthy ways."

- "From Non-Relational to Relational Praxis" (p. 45).

  Here Pickard is looking to a "Trinitarian dynamic", such as that explored by Greenwood (2002, 2009), to inform the quality of mutuality in collaborative working.

- "From Skills to Character" (p. 46).

  Pickard presses for ministry which focusses on growth in inhabited wisdom as opposed to gaining only skills and competencies. The latter, he asserts, will always "trump" the former in "a fragmented, competitive, mechanistic environment" (p. 46)

- "From Structure to Energy" (p. 47).

  In times of high anxiety and uncertainty, he observes the tendency of leaders to opt for new structures and urges that we give at least as much

attention to the dynamics of organisational life as those structures (new or otherwise).

- "From Servant to Friend" (p. 48).

  Here Pickard turns to the discourses in the gospel of John and sees friendship functioning "as a paradigm for collaborative ministry" (p. 50). He notes some of the difficulties of this category, notably the keeping of professional distance or how the rhetoric of "all friends together" can mask issues of power and control. Nevertheless, he stresses that "If the truth of our lives in Christ is that we are inescapably 'one of another' then friendship is encoded into our life together" (p. 50).

1.5 Situating myself within Practical Theology

1.5.1 Embodied theology

Miller-McLemore (2012) describes Practical Theology as "a general way of doing theology concerned with the embodiment of religious belief in the day-to-day lives of individuals and communities" (Chapter 4, sec. Background and …, para. 12). As an investigation into relational practices and activity within the Church in Wales, this thesis is deeply concerned with making sense of my own and others' embodied existence in the church. That the Church's practice of collaboration is justified and promoted from scriptural and ecclesiological commitments places it firmly within the realm of theology. As a piece of theological reflection on practice, I am also hoping that this writing will make some contribution to better practice. In other words, I am motivated by a "desire to make a difference in the world" (Chapter 4. sec. History and Context, para. 4) — particularly the world of the Church in Wales.

1.5.2 Conceptual basis

Osmer (2011) explores the notion of a paradigm as an "interpretative model" within practical theology. Citing Hans Küng, he writes that such a model "encompasses 'an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on

shared by the members of a given community'" (p. 1). He proceeds to differentiate between various paradigms that are "very much alive in the church today" (p. 2). Writing in the context of American Churches, he contrasts the "applied dogmatics found in Protestant orthodoxy and applied Scripture found in contemporary Christian fundamentalism" (p. 2) with the paradigm of reflective practice. This paradigm of practical theology, he maintains, allows for dialogue with and insight from other disciplines such as the social sciences. Here Osmer draws on his earlier reflective cycle in which he uses four simple questions to query a particular situation or problem:

- What is going on?
  The descriptive-empirical task. Priestly listening.
- Why is this going on?
  The interpretive task. Sagely wisdom.
- What ought to be going on?
  The normative task. Prophetic discernment.
- How might we respond?
  The pragmatic task. Servant Leadership.

(R. R. Osmer, 2008, pp. 4, 28)

Throughout the process, critical choices have to be made about the weight given to different 'voices' and authorities. Osmer also grounds the process in spiritual practice – hence the titles of "Priestly listening …" and so on. In this thesis I broadly follow the cycle above, though not in a purely mechanical fashion. Like all such reflective processes, any or all the elements may be going on at a given moment with much movement backwards and forwards.

1.5.3 An Anglican focus

Being appreciative of Osmer's grounding of the model in spiritual practice, I have also been mindful of my own Anglican background. Thus, I have sought to perceive my movement along this reflective pathway in a manner sympathetic to Anglican traditions and spirituality, varied as they are. Sedgwick (2018), for example, makes a persuasive case for "an Anglican *habitus*[15], which is about pastoral accommodation to the realities of the society and culture in which it is set" (p. 9).

[15] Italics in the original

Such pastoral accommodation, "found quintessentially in George Herbert's *A Priest to the Temple,* or *The Country Parson*" (p. 11)*,* often exudes the language of worship. Indeed, classic Anglican liturgy such as in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 expresses this pastoral ethic within the common life of the church and its daily offering of prayer. There is too, in this pastoral tradition, faithfulness to Scripture alongside the use of tradition and reason, the three together undergirding the Anglican habitus of pastoral concern and worship.

1.6 Research overview

In many ways, this research project and thesis is both a reflection on and means of exploring, testing, and extending the particulars of Pickard's moves for the Church in Wales. Consequently, several clusters of questions have surfaced in the course of progressing this project, such as:

- Is Pickard correct to connect power to competition and cooperation? And is it true that competition in the Church in Wales skews the exercise of power? Who holds power and for what purpose? Are competition and cooperation inherently opposed? How can I understand this theologically?
- Is the historically derived understanding of ordained ministry and priesthood in the Church in Wales problematic for relations between clergy and laity and therefore of collaborative ministry? Is a hierarchical structure always restrictive of cooperative action?
- Do constructive processes of teamworking exist that would be sympathetic to a theological understanding of collaboration in the Body of Christ?

In seeking to answer these questions, I have been concerned that my project should not be merely diagnostic and thus have the effect of pathologising the clergy and laity of the Church in Wales.

The project, therefore, has a sequence of research objectives. First, to listen to stories of Church in Wales clergy concerning their past and current experience of collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales. Second, to use Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of practices to conceptualise collaborative ministry as a practice within the institution of the Church in Wales. Third to evaluate collaborative team processes

that can fit within Bourdieu's scheme and be theologically robust. Finally, to assess the appropriateness of using Bourdieu and to engage critically with theological patterns of collaboration.

In seeking to reach these objectives, I agree with Pickard when he says that collaboration is a non-negotiable consequence of being Christian and resides at the heart of belonging to the body of Christ and, therefore, of all Christian ministries:

> In the ecclesia of God it is never a question of whether we shall collaborate or not – that is never the question. The question is how shall we do it so that the true character of the gospel of God shines forth more brightly. (Pickard, 2010, p. 436)

In reflecting critically (and with some criticism) on the Church in Wales, I want to keep in touch with the realities and vulnerabilities of the human persons involved. I am seeking to discern intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually the nature of collaborative practice in the Church in Wales and how the church might be aided by embracing it more widely.

1.7 Summary of thesis

1.7.1 Chapter 2: An Appreciative Approach to Collaborative Ministry

In chapter two, I identify Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a constructionist, collaborative methodology for interviewing experienced clergy colleagues on the subject of collaboration in the church. As an approach, AI assumes that the production of sense and meaning can be achieved through narrative inquiry. Further, it seeks to promote action that is imaginative and generative. Theologically, I connect the theme of generativity with the Christian practices of thanksgiving and lament. In introducing my research participants, I outline my hermeneutical approach to interpreting their interviews and relate that to AI. I also present the method of found poetry and poetic transcription as an interpretive strategy in transcription and presentation.

1.7.2 Chapter 3: Bourdieu's thinking tools and collaboration

Chapter three introduces Pierre Bourdieu's reflexive sociology. I will employ his approach to tackle the problem of conceptualising power and competition and

understanding my interviewees' concerns about the Church's hierarchical nature. Bourdieu helps me to see their narratives as expressions of the particular social dynamics of the Church in Wales. Principally, I demonstrate how my interviewees' responses can be better understood in terms of their habitus, the capital they possess, and the nature of the field that is the Church in Wales. The practice of collaboration is thus shown to be a complex interaction of these three elements.

1.7.3 Chapter 4: Field analysis of the Church in Wales

Chapter four continues my use of Bourdieu with a review of the broader field of the Church in Wales. Taking Bourdieu's concept of reproduction, I argue that hierarchical and competitive features of the church were introduced into the Constitution at the time of disestablishment and have continued unhelpfully to suppress collaborative working down to the present.

1.7.4 Chapter 5: The Conundrum of Systems and Power

In chapter five, I explore the habitus of power within the organisational systems of the Church in Wales. I begin with a reflection on power arising from my own practice of training clergy and go on to connect this with my participants' experience of the non-collaborative nature of the church as an organisation. From these experiences and initial reflections, I discuss the way organisations and social groups make 'other' those whom they deem to threaten the status quo. In arguing this, I utilise René Girard's concept of mimetic violence and scapegoating together with William Stringfellow's appropriation of the biblical language of Principalities and Powers to understand the darker side of organisational life. I tie the experience of this dark side with the discussion of lament in the previous chapter so that the voice of 'the other' is not silenced. My conclusion points to a way forward in considering the church as a place of being rather than doing: of formation, not task management.

1.7.5 Chapter 6: Creating a generative team environment

In this chapter, I explore my interviewees' reflections on positive team environments where they have seen collaboration at work. Often, their early experience has influenced their own practice in leading teams. Amongst their reflections, I observe that, within the same diocesan context, some interviewees

felt included (collaborative experience) and others excluded (non-collaborative experience) from the developing narrative of the diocese. To investigate this issue, I employ the constructs of organisational citizenship, pro-social behaviour, psychological safety, and groupthink to interpret the experience of individuals and leaders. As a result of the discussion, I indicate how individuals can be influential and effective team members and how leaders can create fitting structures and processes for teams to flourish. Theologically, I locate this within social Trinitarian understanding of the church.

1.7.6 Chapter 7: Conclusion — a 'body language' of collaboration

My final chapter is a critical evaluation of combining Appreciative Inquiry with Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and their effectiveness as tools for practical theological reflection. I argue that the notion of practice is underdeveloped in the life of the Church in Wales and propose the elevation of the concept to a more conscious level for clergy and laity. Within that this thesis argues for the 'body language' of the Church to reflect a relatedness and sociality theologically grounded in Trinitarian thinking.

1.8 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have traced some of the characteristics and a little of the history of the Church in Wales to give important background information. I have recorded my background within both the Church in Wales and the Church of England, and I have drawn attention to their repeated calls to collaborative practice. Also, I have outlined the objectives I am trying to reach in the thesis and the conceptual framework which governs my thinking. I now turn to a more detailed discussion of my methods.

2 An Appreciative Approach to Collaborative Ministry

2.1 What is problematic?

In chapter one, I demonstrated that rhetoric concerning collaborative ministry in both the Church in Wales and the Church of England has been around for at least fifty years, arguably longer. My conclusion was that, if collaborative ministry were extensively practised, there would be little need for continuing exhortation to adopt it as a practice vital to the life of the church; it would be a part of the ongoing character and practice of the church.

As a member staff at St Michael's College between 2006 and 2015, my professional work on the Continuing Ministerial Development programmes for the Church in Wales gave me ample opportunity to engage with parochial clergy and to reflect on my earlier, nearly eighteen years, of experience as a parish priest. Many clerics expressed frustration about constant appeals to working collaboratively. This was frequently expressed as, "Everyone is telling us that we need to be more collaborative, but nobody is telling us how to do it," often accompanied by concerns about the hierarchical configuration of the church, "Where is this being modelled? We just don't see it put into action by those who are leading us."

The implication is that the church is not listening to the experiences of those it expects to implement and model collaborative practices. Attending to the experience of serving clergy along with others might give us some wisdom to tackle the puzzle of how collaborative ministry can be implemented.

2.2 Why Appreciative Inquiry?

Approaching serving clergy with the intent of discovering their perspective is not necessarily a straightforward task. My own experience concurs with that of Peyton & Gatrell (2013, p. 98): on the one hand there is the risk of the insider-researcher being seen as part of "professional surveillance"; on the other hand there is the risk of colluding in criticism of the organisation and its personnel and adding to participants' stress and even burnout (C. Lee & Horsman, 2002, p. 3; Sofield & Juliano, 1987, p. 34). An earlier consultation and report of the Church in Wales

considered the question of individual and institutional burnout and, reflecting on rapidly declining numbers of serving clergy, observed:

> In a Church that has traditionally placed a great deal of reliance upon its stipendiary clergy this is change of immense proportions. Already, many clergy feel swamped and isolated by the ever-increasing number of responsibilities they bear and the seemingly impossible demands on their time and energy. In addition, there can be a sense of threat from lay ministries taking over their professional role, of being alone in their cure, of not being equipped to work collaboratively, of not having enough time or energy for the core elements of their calling – prayer and study of the scriptures. It would be a gross exaggeration to say that all clergy feel like this and certainly not all of the time. However, a significant number do, and increasingly ministry officers are having conversations where these anxieties surface. (Church in Wales, 2011a, p. 11)

Thus, in approaching this research, it was crucial to reflect upon both the lens through which I would view the issues together with the stance I would take in doing so (Schall, Ospina, Godsoe, & Dodge, 2004). As a trained MBTI® practitioner since 2002 I have had an interest in research on personality type and temperament in the church (e.g. Berry, Francis, Rolph, & Rolph, 2012; L. J. Francis, Hills, & Rutledge, 2008; L. J. Francis & Turton, 2004; Leslie J Francis, Jones, & Robbins, 2004). However, while I often make use of such findings (especially when conducting MBTI® feedback seminars), it seems that this type of research is forensic and diagnostic in nature. It often labels a problem and prescribes a solution but does not deal with the complexities of how that is to be achieved. This is perhaps a caricature, but I have, nevertheless, found such an approach to be of limited usefulness in learning how to effect cultural change within an organisation.

Conversely, Appreciative Inquiry offers the lens of constructionism and the invitation to view collaborative ministry as a product of the way we construe our social world. As such, it provides insight into the complex relations that create the social world we experience (M. M. Gergen, Gergen, & Barrett, 2004, pp. 7–10).

Further, it encourages a positive, hopeful stance that might mitigate some of the potential pitfalls for the insider-researcher as highlighted above.

2.3 What is Appreciative Inquiry?

2.3.1 Constructionism

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) draws upon a social constructionist understanding of language and meaning-making. It originates in research on organisational development by Cooperrider & Srivastva (1987) who themselves drew upon the work of Kenneth Gergen.

> Social constructionism views discourse about the world not as a reflection or map of the world but as an artifact of communal interchange. … [It] is principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live. (K. Gergen, 1985, p. 266)

In utilising Gergen's work, Cooperrider and Srivastva argued for a reversal out of the cul-de-sac that action research had entered through "its romance with "action" at the expense of "theory"." This romance had resulted in a sterile, problem-solving approach that could achieve no more than "help raise to its full potential the workings of the status quo" in organisational life (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987, p. 19). In other words, no new knowledge can be generated, only the renewal and replication of existing categories of thought and practice.

In contrast to this, social constructionism recognises that "as human beings we are constantly in symbolic interaction, attempting to develop conceptions that will allow us to make sense of and give meaning to experience through the use of language, ideas, signs, theories, and names" (p. 22). Importantly, Cooperrider and Srivastva also recognise the place of metaphor in sense-making, and there is a connection here with Paul Ricoeur's elucidation of metaphor as a "vivifying principle" inviting a reader's interpretation and creative imagination (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 358).

2.3.2 Assumptions and Principles of AI

The principles of AI, developed from Cooperrider and Srivastva's research are discussed in many works (Branson, 2004; Reed, 2007; Watkins & Mohr, 2001) and form core assumptions for the practice of AI in research or organisational development. Thus, in planning my research project and working with my participants, I have kept the following principles of AI in mind:

The Constructivist Principle, outlined above, also takes note of the way that different people tell distinctive stories about their lives and the organisations to which they belong. As researchers, we are not attempting to establish the truth of phenomena in these varying accounts. Instead, we pay attention to points of difference and similarity and allow people to imagine new ways to act and think.

The Principle of Simultaneity notices that as we ask questions, so we and the situation are changed. As researchers, therefore, we recognise that the style of our questioning already determines the contours of the response.

The Poetic Principle affirms that people, as they interpret the world and themselves, author their lives, choosing plotlines, selecting characters, deciding what to include, and what to leave out.

The Anticipatory Principle envisages that how people think and feel about the future influences the way they move into that future. In AI action research, there is an assumption that in shaping the future, we should take the best of the past. Therefore, AI questions seek to identify and elucidate examples of previous or existing good practice that was or is life-giving and generative.

The Positive Principle returns to the appreciative standpoint through focussing on the positive, keeping stories of hope, joy and encouragement at the centre.

2.3.3 AI's connection with other fields of research

2.3.3.1 Well-being theory

Appreciative Inquiry, in some ways, parallels similar research in the field of Well-being theory. Seligman (2011) perceives that well-being possesses five elements: positive emotion, engagement (or flow), meaning, positive relationships and

accomplishment. He contrasts the narrower vision of authentic happiness theory with the more robust well-being theory and concludes that well-being encompasses times of difficulty because its goal is "to increase the amount of *flourishing* in your life and on the planet" (Seligman, 2011, Chapter 1).

2.3.3.2 Scarcity

In a similar fashion, but working from the opposite direction, Mullainathan & Shafir (2013) relate the effect of scarcity upon the ability of organisations and individuals to think broadly and creatively and thus avoid the pitfalls of "tunnel" vision. Shortage of time, money, people, resources, and such drastically reduces the cognitive and creative "bandwidth" available to people with its consequent negative impact for individuals and organisations.

The implication arising from both these fields of research is that the way we think, either positively or negatively (our thought world), shapes the manner of our encounter with the world around us. Consequently, it also impacts on our practices of fashioning our worlds together with the way we integrate or resist their fashioning of us.

A large part of my argument rests on the notion that the existing thought-world of the Church in Wales, being limited, limits our ability to practice collaborative ministry. Consequently, in turning to a constructionist process like Appreciative Inquiry, I am seeking to use this collaborative research method so that the research process mirrors the desired outcome — namely, a collective re-imagining of relationships that make collaboration more likely.

2.4 AI Interviews

2.4.1 Choosing interviews

As I have described above, at the heart of AI research and practice are deep listening to and collaboration with participants. A researcher employing AI methods is engaged in a social practice of learning from the stories people tell of their past, co-operating with them in the creation of emerging narratives, and exploring symbolic language and metaphors (Bushe & Marshak, 2014, p. 1).

My work on both Initial and Continuing Ministerial Education and Development (IME and CMD) programmes for the Church in Wales between 2006 and 2015 gave me extensive experience of listening to and working with clergy at various stages of ministry. From this, I decided that individual interviews where I could follow particular stories and lines of thought arising in conversation would enable me to investigate at a greater depth than a group experience would afford (Bryman, 2012, p. 505). Also, the task of transcription would be more straightforward than that from a group setting. As the interviews proceeded, I soon realised that allowing the voice of individuals to be heard in the thesis would also be a significant feature of the research, because it allows the 'smaller voices' to be heard.

2.4.2 Ethics

As part of my submission for ethical approval, I used the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form in Appendices B and C. In addition to the common ethical concerns about confidentiality, the security of data, and not harming participants, some of the central ethical concerns I had were about faithfully interpreting each participant's contribution. I discuss this issue below. Also, as the Church in Wales is a relatively small Church where clergy are familiar with a broad range of people, I have taken steps to anonymise details of places and events, as well as names, that might otherwise allow interviewees to be identified. My ethics approval confirmation is in Appendix E.

2.4.3 Sampling

My experience of working with groups of clergy provided a backdrop to my research interviews and gave me a reasonably detailed understanding of the issues facing serving clergy. I selected clergy who were identified as leaders by their dioceses and were being prompted to develop more collaborative styles of ministry. Also, my experience gave me connections and personal relationships of trust that I could draw on to request interviews to seek more in-depth information. My sampling, therefore, may best be described as purposive (Bryman, 2012, pp. 415–427). I wanted to go deeper rather than broader.

The group of interviewees I selected had all been in ministry for more than ten years. Each had extensive parochial experience and a close familiarity with the

drastic changes that were taking place as a result of the review of the Church in Wales (Harries et al., 2012). In different ways, they were all at the 'front line' of the changes that are still being implemented and each, therefore, had much direct experience on which to reflect. In relation to collaborative ministry, they were the ones who were being expected to lead ordained and lay-ministry colleagues, whole ministry areas, parishes, and congregations into the new practices.

I conducted a total of nine interviews, of which three participants were female. This imbalance reflects something of the issue of the gender imbalance in the Church in Wales and especially at more senior levels. To test my interview questions, I conducted a self-interview, recording and transcribing my responses as I would do for my interviews proper. I had not anticipated making use of this interview. However, it turned out to be something of a surprise and cause of some reflection. That interview proved, with hindsight, to be indicative of the problems I would face in analysing the data of all my participants – the volume of data and emotions evoked.

In this respect, AI research is best viewed as a collaborative enterprise which "is not simply a matter of 'ballot box' research, in which those with the loudest voices decide research strategy" (Reed, 2007, p. 111). Rather than solely gathering information, it is a process of making sense and conceiving new meaning for present-day and future action.

2.4.4 Interview style

My interview style consisted of a set of semi-structured questions where I would seek to do more listening than talking. The question guide that I used is in Appendix D. It consists of quite a long list of questions, but not all of them were used on every occasion.

Each interview was audio-recorded, and my purpose was to draw out stories and themes and to seek clarification where necessary. The questions were all designed to be appreciative. Following the example of Branson (2004) and Watkins & Mohr (2001), I began with questions about life-giving experiences in the past; I reasoned that starting with their initial sense of vocation and early years in ministry, we

would commence on a positive footing. From there, I moved to the deeper questions about ministerial practices, always trying to keep the tone conversational and reflective. Using the AI process, I hoped to avoid, or at least attenuate, the turn to cynicism that occurs in so many clergy conversations.

2.5 Interpreting the Interviews

Following transcription, the texts of the interviews were imported into the Quirkos® qualitative data analysis software tool. Quirkos provides a "visual and easy way to code, analyse and explore unstructured text data" ("Quirkos"). An example of the main screen "canvas" can be found in Appendix F.

The software allowed me to cycle quickly through several iterations of investigation, each adding depth and complexity to the analysis. At the initial level, I coded my first impression of what each interview was about: this allowed me to see where the main contours of similarity and difference were in the discussions. Following AI practice, my intention was not to quantify the number of times a theme was raised but to pay attention to each voice, recognising that sometimes one individual might capture something of importance relating to my research questions; in effect, something that has resonance with or catches what others are saying (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, pp. 119–121). Therefore, my personal and subjective judgement was a dynamic feature in the interpretation. However, this is professional judgement forged over more than 30 years of ordained practice in the Church in Wales and the Church of England. It is, also, judgement that is fluid and continues to develop in the light of experience and reflection.

2.5.1 Reflexivity

In making sense of AI information, Reed (2007, p. 137) likens the process to map-making. A map represents selected aspects of a much more complex reality. Thus, the selection of certain topographic features for emphasis makes each kind of map useful for its intended purpose. So, for example, we might choose a specialist map depending on whether we intend hiking, cycling, going on a long car journey by major roads, or travelling by a public transport system such as the London Tube. The process of building a simplified model or map depends on the perspective of

the map-maker and the map's intended use. Moreover, its usefulness or validity depends on its ability to represent and to some degree correspond to the physical world – perhaps, not in every detail but certainly in the critical information relating to its use.

My intention in mapping the lived reality of clergy practice concerning collaborative ministry was to locate and make sense of my own experience within the broader experience of clergy colleagues. What is more, I anticipated digging more deeply into my own understanding of collaboration. In the self-interview, noted above, I reflected on what I felt was lacking in the hierarchical relationships within the Church in Wales:

> Q. What would I ask of the church?
>
> Thinking hierarchically
> I want people to pay more attention
> I want them to value the human
> I want them to relate more
> I want them to be alongside
> I want them to listen more
> and speak less.
> I want them to be
> more suggestive than directive.
> I want them to look
> at what gifts people have to offer
> I want to encourage
> that being there
> in and for one another.

In common with my participants, I found I could describe what should be present in a relational map of the church but had no means of explaining its continued absence or how to redraw the existing map to put the missing features in place.

Accordingly, experience teaches that map-making from raw interview data is a complicated procedure requiring, as it does, work with living human documents (Boisen, 2005; Gerkin, 2005; Miller-McLemore, 2012). The multiplicity of

perspectives of both researcher and participants creates a complex of raw data that is hard to untangle. Reflecting on the issue of researcher stance and perspective, Savin-Baden (2004, p. 366) argues for a move from analysis to interpretation in which reflexivity is paramount. This move places me amid my research participants as one who, like them, is subject (willingly) to the systems and structures of the Church in Wales. Like them, I have decades of experience of the church's limitations and opportunities. Some of my own experience closely parallels that of my participants, and some of it diverges widely from theirs. However, a consequence of taking their and my practice as my chosen field of research is an ascription of power and deference toward me combined with an expectation that I will be able to speak with authority in this field. As ever, the process of education consecrates[16] and gives power to certain voices, my own included.

Savin-Baden (2004) extends the idea of reflexivity beyond sincere self-knowledge to the often messy and convoluted process of moving from analysis to interpretation (p. 368). This transition involves making sense of and representing complex and voluminous data. Like the map-maker representing a three-dimensional spheroid on a two-dimensional sheet, there are compromises and simplifications to be made in producing something illuminating and useful for further exploration.

In map-making it is impossible to accurately render all aspects of real-world geography so that choice must be made about the degree of distortion that will be permissible. (Rosenberg, 2018). Similarly, in analysing and mapping my participants' interviews I have been aware of the need to do justice to both the similarities and differences in what they have said; the variety of language they use as they make sense of themselves in their own situation; the nature of my relationship with them; the metaphors they have used, and the stories they have told. Significantly, too, I have been aware of gaps in the data, and, like early mapmakers and navigators, I have frequently been unclear about how the data fits together, where pieces are missing, and how they relate to the whole.

[16] The use of this word comes from Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of symbolic capital and distinction – concepts that I will explore in chapters 3 and 4.

Thus, arriving at meaning and synthesis rather than merely relaying content has occurred in moments of epiphany; transformational moments when the sense of being in a fog of detail has cleared, and connections, relationships, and the value of the complexity has come to the fore (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007, p. 465; Savin-Baden, 2004, pp. 368–370)[17]. For me, selecting portions of the interviews and transposing them from the spoken to the written word has entailed a similar epiphany. As I gave attention to keywords, noticed repetitions, themes, and metaphors, the art of found poetry leapt out as a way to focus and amplify the voice and authorship of each participant (Sjollema, Hordyk, Walsh, Hanley, & Ives, 2012, p. 206).

2.5.2 Poetic Transcription

Found poetry is created from existing sources and, when employed as a method of interpreting and transcribing qualitative research interviews, it seeks to give potency to their representation, with the aim of more "fully capturing and evoking emotive experiences." In this sense, it becomes a form of "poetic transcription" or "poetic inquiry" that aspires to see and understand with the heart. (Sjollema et al., 2012, pp. 206–207). The Arab-American poet Naomi Shihab Nye, in an interview, captures how "knowing words", composing and sharing words, gives them a "bigger life". Poetry, she maintains promotes reflection on life:

> … in every classroom, I would just write on the board, "You are living in a poem." … But I found the students very intrigued by discussing that. "What do you mean, we're living in a poem?" Or, "When? All the time, or just when someone talks about poetry?" And I'd say, "No, when you think, when you're in a very quiet place, when you're remembering, when you're savoring an image, when you're allowing your mind calmly to leap from one thought to another — that's a poem. That's what a poem does." (Nye & Tippett, 2018)

So, for the life-poems I have identified in the transcripts, I have chosen where to begin and where to end, where to break lines, and where to edit, aiming to give

[17] In the world of map-making, Harry Beck's 1933 London Tube Map was arguably one such moment of epiphany that resulted in the familiar map we know today (Graham-Smith, 2018).

both emphasis and space for reflection. Like some styles of reading the Psalms, I have sought to imbue the text with a meditative pace so that the reader can enter the participant's thought-world and not speedily consume the text to extract information. In this task, I have endeavoured to honour and be loyal to the vulnerability, honesty, and grappling with truth that came to light as I listened to my participants.

Nye's poetry reveals a deep listening to events and other people, together with being attuned to her own embodied thoughts and emotions. On a similar note, Pryce (2015) writes of poetry giving access to "hidden territory … the non-rational domain of story, identity and imagination" and that it "offers space for imaginative theological conversation" (pp. 140—141). Here we enter into the world of hermeneutics and the "nature of human understanding and the 'art of thinking'" (Thiselton, 2004, p. 3). As this forms an integral part of my approach to interpreting both my interviewees and biblical texts, I now turn to a discussion of my hermeneutical approach.

2.5.3 Hermeneutics and Appreciative Inquiry

2.5.3.1 'Reading' people and situations

I was influenced in my early ministerial formation by an understanding of interpretation that examined the constructs by which we perceive and make our worlds (e.g. Hull, 1985; Thiselton, 1992, 1995; Wright, 1992). Insight about the hermeneutics of reading both written documents and "living human documents" (Boisen, 2005; Gerkin, 2005) helped, equally, in appropriating biblical texts so that preaching engages with modern life and pastoral practice can fathom the complexities of encounters where there are often competing narratives about a contested situation (Dominian, 1984; Jacobs, 1982, 2000).

Miller-McLemore (2012) usefully extends the concept of the living human document to include it within "the living human web." In doing so, she takes account of the social dynamics in which we are all immersed. Her concern is to move pastoral practice from what she perceives as a focus on individualistic, empathetic, and therapeutic models of interpreting the human document to see

them as “part of a wide cultural, social, and religious context.” Her principal aim is to “emphasize … the need to attend to social inequalities and injustices that perpetuate suffering” (Chapter 1—2). In seeking to understand and interpret this living human web, she maintains that it is especially important to attend to those who “haven’t yet spoken” – they must be allowed to speak for themselves from “within their own contexts.” The practical necessity is to listen carefully to the voice and insight of the “underprivileged, the outcast, the underclass, and the silenced.” Her goal is explicitly political and theological, a way of taking seriously “the responsibilities of the discipline [of pastoral theology] in relationship to new understandings of culture, power, and the nature of selfhood and the divine” (Chapter 2, para. 1). In this respect, she stands within feminist and liberation traditions and their resistance to the dominant and dominating hermeneutic of the powerful. The “goal” of such resistance is “the unmasking of the kind of illusions and interpretative assumption or manipulations that support and appear to legitimize injustice or domination” (Thiselton, 1992, p. 461). For writers such as a Wink (1984, 1998) and Trible (1978, 1984), in the fields of non-violent peace-making and feminist theology respectively, it is the conventional interpretations of biblical texts themselves that are the focus of resistance and the place for “necessary consciousness-raising” (Thiselton, 1992, p. 462).

2.5.3.2 Models of Interpretation

Conventional interpretations arise from unconscious and unexamined, taken-for-granted ways of perceiving the world. What Miller-McLemore, Wink, and Trible and others lay bare is that these frames of reference with their language constructs have a normative quality about them and using them barely registers as a matter of interpretation. Thus, to get beyond or behind our usual taken-for-granted categories, we need to see that these frames of reference themselves are both shaped by and shape our pre-judgments or prejudices, our assumptions, knowledge, education, and embodied social and psychological development etc. Thus, the question becomes one of how we determine the basis for our interpretation.

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768—1834), widely acknowledged to be the founder of modern hermeneutics, advocated a form of interpretation that combines holistic hermeneutical strategies with "dialogical-dialectic" (Helmer, 2010, pp. 33–35). What Schleiermacher brings together in this method are cycles of interpretation that allow understanding to develop by degrees as the interpreter moves from an initial to a more refined grasp of the meaning of a text *and* dialogical-dialectic as a means of testing, clarifying, and (potentially) reaching agreement and understanding (Bowie, 1998, pp. xxix–xxx). The elements of Schleiermacher's method may be summarised as follows:

The overall goal is "to understand the utterance at first just as well and then better than its author" (Schleiermacher, 1998, p. 23, sec. 8.3). This is achieved by seeking to understand on two broad fronts: psychological and grammatical. Here Schleiermacher describes a sophisticated appreciation of the way language both originates in an individual's thought, and the way that thought is determined by language (Schleiermacher, 1998, pp. 8–11).

The method proceeds by seeking to gain an understanding of "the vocabulary and the history of the era of an author" which forms the whole to which his writings relate as a part, but "the whole must, in turn, be understood from the part" (Schleiermacher, 1998, p. 24, sec. 20). The process is such that "even within a single text the particular can only be understood from out of the whole, and a cursory reading to get an overview of the whole must therefore precede the more precise explication" (Schleiermacher, 1998, p. 27, sec. 23). In paying attention to the larger whole of the language and culture of an author, it might become possible to "understand the author better than he does himself", to articulate what was largely unconscious or unexpressed for the author (Schleiermacher, 1998, p. 33, sec. 6).

Divination, trial and error, or artistry also play a role in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics at the point where we seek to comprehend an author as an individual: to "transforms oneself into the other person and try to understand the individual element directly" (Schleiermacher, 1998, pp. 92–93, sec. 6). In other words, to understand them as a unique person within their own particular context (Thiselton, 1992, pp. 222–225).

In effect, there is intuition, or we could say a style akin to 'jazz' in the art of interpretation. He likens this to how we may have a genuine close rapport with a friend that gives an understanding of them. Schleiermacher seeks just that sort of knowledge of an author. Here we are in similar territory to our discussion above on poetics and the way it gives voice to and opens space for creative leaps and connections.

Schleiermacher's hermeneutical approach has been the subject of critique from several directions. Ricoeur (1977) contends that the relationship between the psychological and grammatical, or between divination and critical approaches is far from clear.

> Schleiermacher never managed to distinguish clearly between these two possible orientations of technical interpretation: towards the idea which governs the work or towards the author considered as a psychological being. (p. 187)

The issue this raises is twofold: first, of locating the text or discourse of an individual within a broader corpus — what is its genre and "common nature of language and life … within the same literary field"? (p. 189) Second, how do we understand an individual's text or discourse within their life-world "which leads to a living vision of the work's production" (p. 189)?

Ricoeur maintains that this internal divide in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics was nevertheless capable of being resolved through his understanding of an author's style:

> He was one of the first to perceive that style is not a matter of ornamentation; it marks the union of thought and language, the union of the common and the singular in an author's project. (p. 188)

This discussion of hermeneutics will be revisited in succeeding chapters as I consider the practice of collaborative ministry within the systems and structures of the Church in Wales. The hermeneutic task will be one of reading the practice of individuals and groups within the Church's relations of power. This will require

holding together both appreciation and critique. Here Ricoeur adds a helpful pathway between what are often held to be opposing poles in interpretation.

On the one hand, a hermeneutic of suspicion guards us against reading texts in an idolatrous or self-interested fashion; understanding in them only our own perspective and worldview. On the other hand a hermeneutic of retrieval opens us to their transcendent or symbolic possibilities beyond our self-interest; allowing the texts external worldview to intrude on our own (Thiselton, 2004, p. 8). In his study of Freud, whom he ranks among the "masters of suspicion"[18] (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 33), Ricoeur offers an eloquent explanation of this twofold approach: "Hermeneutics seems to me to be animated by this double motivation: willingness to suspect, willingness to listen; vow of rigor, vow of obedience" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 27). Ricoeur's twofold hermeneutic leads to a consideration of the often varied experience of participants in AI processes and especially what to do with negativity. For some, suspicion of the method is to the fore; others are animated by the focus on the positive.

2.6 The problem of the negative for Appreciative Inquiry

2.6.1 The positive versus the generative

A common and serious critique of AI is that it is manipulative in its single-minded attention to the positive. It stands accused that the determination to attend to the positive, to all intents and purposes, merely silences dissent and sweeps genuine concern and criticism under the carpet. In other words, it silences participants' hermeneutic of suspicion while demanding only their hermeneutic of retrieval – 'just the positive, thank you.'

While much AI literature does speak about a focus on the positive, Bushe (2007, 2012) reminds us that the original research by Cooperrider and Srivastva referred as much to generativity as to positivity and that attending to the "shadow" side of organisational life may bring healing and, potentially, deliver generative outcomes. He defines generativity

[18] Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud

> …as the creation of new images, metaphors, physical representations, and so on that have two qualities: they change how people think so that new options for decisions and/or actions become available to them, and they are compelling images that people want to act on. (Bushe, 2013, p. 1)

The essential element in this definition is that the process is co-operative and mutual, involving conversation and learning so that new knowledge is generated. He identifies that sometimes asking for the positive "leaves them wondering how come it's been 10 or 20 years since my best experience?" (Bushe, 2010, pp. 234–235). The increased awareness, while painful, can lead to growth and development. Bushe further identifies this as a sometimes necessary part of a dialogic method of organisational development (OD) as opposed to a diagnostic, problem-solving method characteristic of earlier forms of OD (Bushe & Marshak, 2014, pp. 1–2). In terms of an appreciative, collaborative interview it means that negativity can be the route to new insight and approaches to life.

2.6.2 Lament experienced

In focussing on generativity and accommodating negativity, Bushe draws very close to the biblical theme of lament. Two examples from my participants will, perhaps, illustrate the nature of the lament I encountered in my interview conversations. As described above, I have chosen to represent them here as a form of found poetry to "portray the relational aspects of narratives of experience …" and the fluidity in the discourse of moving between past, present and future (Clandinin, 2016, pp. 151–161, 165). The following texts are taken directly from the interview transcripts, and my editing and interpretative choices have been confined mainly to punctuation and line breaks. A small number of incidental words have been removed to help focus and clarify the sense, and the second example required a little anonymising to remove details of the exact parish. All names are pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

First, John reflects on the culture of the Church in Wales. His threefold use of the word *serious* indicates the urgency he feels about the defective nature of the institution – something that came out at a variety of points in the interview. Then

his thought that *good people* are deflected from their inherent decency is cut off mid-flow as he turns to a stronger metaphor of being swamped. Here his outlook is reminiscent of themes in Psalm 88: "For my soul is full of troubles … You have put me in the depths of the Pit, in the regions dark and deep. Your wrath lies heavy upon me, and you overwhelm me with all your waves" (Ps 88:3a, 6-7 NRSV[19]). This sense of being overwhelmed by an exacting institution is almost too much; and yet he remains within the institution, but with critical questions.

John

I think seriously
we need to look at the organisation of our churches
and really question the culture we're in at the moment,
that actually turns good people into almost –
you know,
the culture always seems to swamp you
you almost become what you don't want to become
and I think we need to seriously look
at the culture of the church
to ask serious questions of it.

Second, Simon remembers his first experience of leading a parish as its Vicar. Here he recalls the rigid structures that would not bend to support him in responding to the pastoral needs he experienced; how money dominated; and, significantly, the sense of isolation with no one who would heed the cry for help. The only course of action remaining open to him, "breaking the rules", compounded the sense of abandonment and of being alone by "myself."

Simon

When I went [there], you know,
there was no curate and no possibility of a curate –
and it was an incredibly demanding parish –
the feeling of isolation
rose to the surface quite a bit as the years went by

[19] All Biblical quotations from New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition)

and there was actually no way of addressing it
within the structure of the church
because the diocese had said
'there's no way we can put a curate in there'
because curates in those days went to parishes
where there was money.

So there was no question of pastoral need,
it was just those [who] were flush enough to have them
and there was no possibility of accredited lay ministry in those days:
there was none, apart from Lay Readers
who were very much seen as people who preached,
and that was it
there was no pastoral element in their ministry at all –
they just preached
but that wasn't the primary need –
not at all.

There was no way to address it through the church
as an organisation, an institution
in the end, I just had to do it myself –
and broke the rules.

2.6.3 Lament and Praise – AI theology

Bushe's emphasis on generativity rather than on a naïve positivity reveals a more nuanced grasp of the actual dynamics of much organisational life. The church, it is widely acknowledged, has historically as well as in the present-day displayed the power to damage individuals and groups in almost equal measure to its potential to bless them and give life. In the notion of generativity and the attendant willingness to delve into the shadow side of organisations, both sides of Ricoeur's vow are present – suspicion and listening, rigour and obedience. There is, too, a fruitful exchange to be had with the themes of lament and praise as found in the Psalms and other Wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

Walter Brueggemann, for instance, notes how the lament psalms[20] give voice to the powerless and oppressed:

> The lament psalm is a Jewish refusal of silence before God. This Jewish refusal of silence is not cultural, sociological, or psychological, but it is in the end, theological. It is a Jewish understanding that an adequate relationship with God permits and requires a human voice that will speak out against every wrong perpetrated either on earth or by heaven. …
>
> … [the lament psalms] constitute either the breaking of silence against the enemy by summoning God or the breaking of silence against God when God is perceived to be unjust or fickle. (Brueggemann, 2001, p. 22)

Furthermore, he contends that in the transaction between the weak and the powerful, coercive silence eventually erupts in violence against the self or the perpetrator. Also, the inequality of the power structures legitimates a turn to violence in both parties – the powerful in wanting to preserve a system advantageous to themselves, the powerless in wanting to break free from oppression. In later chapters, I will explore the theme of power more closely and present the notion of symbolic violence as a means by which organisations can effect a coercive silence not through overt physical violence but by manipulation of our thought worlds and habits of practice.

Brueggemann insists that the lament Psalms, in breaking the silence and challenging the domination of the powerful, cause change to happen. The action of the powerless in giving voice to subversive lament makes things happen differently – even if it heightens oppression and violence in the short term. It is this subversive nature of lament that gives rise to the characteristic move "from plea to praise in

[20] "The lament psalms, then, are a complaint that makes the shrill insistence that: 1. Things are not right in the present arrangement. 2. They need not stay this way and can be changed. 3. The speaker will not accept them in this way, for the present arrangement is intolerable. 4. It is God's obligation to change things." (Brueggemann, 1995, p. 105)

the Psalms." Moreover, "… the situation would never have gotten to be one of praise had there not been this protest and petition/complaint at the outset" (p. 23).

Nancy Lee, in her study of lament in the Old Testament, takes account of the often-one-sided nature of lament: "some 44 of the 73 lament psalms remain, within the text, unanswered or waiting for help, suggestive of the hard realities of life, in which the faithful wait for God's intervention – sometimes a long time coming." In her reflection on the case of Job, she sees that "[t]hose who experience the severest suffering or persecution often feel alone or abandoned, yet long to be heard and recognized." For individuals and groups who experience the consequences of tragedy, simply "getting a hearing" for their lament "can be transformative and empowering – and much more so if it is from God." Importantly, too, she discerns how lament, particularly in Job, may direct us to a grieving process that allows us "to get past the embitterment, and get on with living." (N. C. Lee, 2010, Chapter 4)

Brueggemann goes on to assert that in contemporary church usage, the lament form has suffered near wholesale neglect in "the functioning canon"(Brueggemann, 1995, p. 111). This loss is evidenced by the frequent choice of lectionary compilers to omit passages such as the so-called cursing verses in the Psalms. John Bell (2000, pp. 26–28) has made a similar case concerning the musical repertoire of many churches and the way hymns and worship songs are both written and selected from within a praise genre. He notes the negative pastoral consequences for some people trying to cope with devastating life experiences but finding that the church offers only uplifting praise style worship.

The loss of lament as a public mode of speech is highly significant for Brueggeman:

> I believe… that a theological monopoly is reinforced, docility and submissiveness are engendered, and the outcome in terms of social practice is to reinforce and consolidate the political-economic monopoly of the status quo. In other words, the removal of lament from life and liturgy is not disinterested and, I suggest, only partly unintentional. (Brueggemann, 1995, p. 102)

The consequences, he maintains, are twofold: first regarding what he characterises as “genuine covenant interaction”; second, regarding “the stifling of the question of theodicy” (p. 104). In the first case, the absence of lament denies the sort of meaningful pastoral encounter with pain and suffering described by Bell. Alternatively, in the case of an organisation’s culture, such as in the Church in Wales, it encourages leaders (the powerful) to listen only to the voices that affirm the party line without critique. For the second case, the means of asking legitimate questions concerning social justice and the common good are blocked. When lament is permitted, it has something of the nature of “a claim filed in court in order to ensure that the question of justice is formally articulated” (p. 105): its absence denies that possibility.

The turn in the Psalms from lamentation to praise and sometimes back again gives us a rich vocabulary in which to locate the appreciation and generativity of AI research (Branson, 2004, pp. 52–54). The biblical traditions of lament and thanksgiving are deep wells from which to water the seedbed of experience and the resulting narratives gleaned in interviews. The interaction between researcher and research participant becomes one in which voice is given, and silence is broken concerning the darker, often oppressive side of church life. There is space for thankfulness about enriching, life-giving experiences of the past that enables them to be remembered and re-presented so that they become a source of vitality in shaping the future. Significantly there is the promise that the complaints that so often terminate in despair, cynicism and isolation, may be transformed into hope and positive (re)engagement. In these terms, the researcher enters a covenant relationship with participants, seeking to honour their narratives and experience. In articulating their lament and thanksgiving, and attempting to interpret, reimagine and re-present their story, the desire is to generate new understanding and, in some small way, to transform the organisation. There is, therefore, a therapeutic dimension to the collaborative Appreciative Inquiry process when it allows for both the negative and positive, lament as well as thanksgiving. In the following section, I will show how my research experience featured both lament and praise.

2.6.4 Thanksgiving experienced

Both examples above from John and Simon echo the forms of lament found in the Psalms and the Old Testament generally. Within the context of the trust between us in the interview, each could articulate what they felt to be deep frustration with the church as an organisation. However, their motivation to remain in the church, their sustaining thankfulness, came from their ability to influence local parish relationships and structures and to model the style of loyal relationships they had glimpsed in earlier experiences of ministry.

John, again, calls to mind the value of the trust he experienced as one of three decidedly different clergy who, nevertheless, worked closely together.

> ***John***
> …for those three years, for whatever reason,
> it worked.
> And we worked together very successfully
> I think because we liked each other …
> I think we trusted each other
> we laughed together
> I guess we were real with each other …
> And for three years it worked.

For Simon, it was the experience of a sermon by a long-standing priest-friend that inspired him in the present.

> ***Simon***
> [The preacher] said
> if you had a can of spray paint
> and you were allowed to spray graffiti
> on the walls outside this church …
> what message would you spray?
> and he said
> this is what I'd spray
> 'This man sits down with sinners and eats with them.'

So, I'm sort of visualising you know
a church which is very obviously open
and welcome
and inclusive
and which gives people space
and which gives them a safe place to be …
to become themselves
to be themselves
in relation to everybody else who's in there.
And from that to go out
and relate to a world in need.

For both John and Simon, there are traditions of Christian practice and readings of the Bible that are informing their vision of what the church could be. They have an idea of the church, one that they have glimpsed from time to time in the past; but it is an idea that stands at odds with the institutional reality they often experience. It is here that Appreciative Inquiry and social constructionism can help us gain a more nuanced reading of the Bible and Christian tradition so that it speaks more congruently into the ambiguities of the present day.

2.7 Reading the New Testament with AI

Viewed through a theological lens, AI may stimulate reflection on the social world of the New Testament. Thus Paul's Body of Christ metaphor in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 is referenced habitually as a basis for collaborative ministry (Board of Mission, 1998, pp. 7, 53; Cladis, 1999, pp. 131, 175; Robertson, 2016, pp. 103, 111–112). However, simple proof-texting of Paul's rhetoric concerning relationships in the Body of Christ begs the question of whether these texts are deliberately at odds with the social world he and his churches faced? Does Paul portray an idealisation of church relationships that may, from a human perspective, be impossible to attain?

In writing to the Romans of their behaviour and relationships with one another, he is explicit that their dealings within the church should have a quality that is entirely different to their pre-Christian experience in the world: "Do not be conformed to

this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds …" (Rom 12.2 NRSV). As in 1 Corinthians, he appears to be addressing a case of actual conflict in the Roman church and is urging them to renewed practices of relating to one another.

> From his experience with the Church at Corinth (see 1 Cor. 1-4; 12-14), the apostle knows that a wealth of spiritual gifts also means variety, and variety can produce competition, and from competition it is only one small step to conflict. (Haacker, 2003, p. 51)

For the remainder of Romans 12 and 13, Paul sets out an ethic of mutual love creating a mental vision of "a harmonious community which could serve as a model for society as a whole" (p. 51). However, when we turn to Romans 14, we see that the reality of the Christian community in Rome "seem[s] to be tainted by mutual criticism, fears, and contempt" (p. 51).

Consequently, in appropriating New Testament texts such as these for our own time, the lens of social construction permits us to look more closely at the language that is being used to shape that social world. It requires a hermeneutic that is prepared to read these texts using the tools of social, literary, historical criticism, and so on, alongside an appreciation of their status within the church as inspired scripture.

2.8 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined my choice of Appreciative Inquiry as a research method and reflected on it as a theological and hermeneutical stance for both conducting and interpreting interviews. In addition, I have explained my rationale for presenting and interpreting my interviewees' speech as poetry so that we may hear their voice more clearly. I have also introduced some of their concerns through the lens of the biblical themes of lament and praise. However, listening to the lament of my interviewees left me with the problem of how to theorise their experience of being subject to the hierarchical structures of the church. Pointers from (Chambers, 2012, pp. 222–223, 234–5), along with conversations with colleagues at St Michael's College, led me to engage with Pierre Bourdieu's

writings. As Chambers puts it temptingly, Bourdieu offers “the potential to marry theory with data in ways that do not distort the reality on the ground” (p. 235).

3 Bourdieu, practice, and collaboration

3.1 Introduction

> I would like to show that with the same instruments, one can analyze phenomena as different as exchanges of honor in a precapitalist society, or, in societies like our own, the action of foundations such as the Ford Foundation or the Fondation de France, exchanges between generations within a family, transactions in markets of cultural or religious goods, and so forth. (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 92)

At the end of the previous chapter, I highlighted the problem of locating my participants' experience within the larger framework of the Church in Wales. All too often, the conversation among clerics descends into passive cynicism about the church and those in authority in the church. I chose to use Appreciative Inquiry as a research tool to attenuate that tendency to cynicism and invite, instead, a generative and imaginative approach to the future.

In this chapter, I will locate my participants' experience within the structural processes of the church by utilising the concept of practice as a social and institutional enterprise. Here I propose to complement Appreciative Inquiry with Pierre Bourdieu's "instruments" of analysis which he refers to as a set of "thinking tools" (Wacquant, 1989, p. 50). These tools, developed in his reflexive sociology, will enable me to consider the 'micro' experience of my participants within an analysis of the 'macro' culture and systems of the Church in Wales as a whole.

Finally, I will bring this Bourdieusian analysis into conversation with Alistair Macintyre's (2007) philosophy of virtue and the theological thinking on practice generated by the Practicing Our Faith project in the United States. There, Dykstra & Bass (2002) reflect on "how a way of life that is deeply responsive to God's grace takes actual shape among human beings" (p. 15). Further, they define Christian practice as "things people do together over time to address fundamental human need in response to and in the light of God's active presence for the life of the world" (p. 18). It is this type of ecclesiological thinking that runs through my use of Bourdieu's analysis of practice.

3.2 Bourdieu and Practice

Bourdieu understands practice to be the result of the interaction of three interrelated components: habitus, capital, and field; he offers the following formula to demonstrate that practice cannot be reduced to one element alone; all three operate in relation to one another.

> [(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice
>
> (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101)

3.2.1 Habitus

Habitus concerns the dispositions, thoughts, feelings, and motivations that cause us to act or not to act in particular ways: to choose this course of action and not another. It is generated by the field or social space in which we have grown up, been educated in, or which has most influenced us. Our habitus develops as we journey from our past to the present and evolves with us into our future. It is shaped by the social space or field in which we live and, furthermore, it contributes to and influences that same social space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 121–140; Maton, 2014). Habitus provides us with a system of perception of practices and their evaluation. So, for example, if we belong in a particular social space and know its rules and conventions, we recognise when someone new is finding it hard to fit in. ‘Habitus thus implies a "sense of one's place" but also a "sense of the place of others"' (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 19).

To give an example, Arthur, another of my participants, describes the habitus of a group of clergy meeting as the chapter in a deanery. He recalled when he was first appointed as Area Dean and the frustration he felt with the patterns of behaviour of the clergy in that setting:

> ***Arthur***
>
> So, the first thing I did
> was scrap clergy chapter
> because I thought
> I’ve sat through enough of them
> to realise they become grumbling shops

and talking about things you can't change
like bishops
ad clerums[21]
and the Church in Wales constitution
and the finances of the diocese.

I'd think
well there's nothing we can change
why are we even thinking about it?
I could be home now
you know
I could be doing something different
I could be having lunch
why am I still talking about this?

And so I knocked clergy chapter on the head
and said in future
we will have ministry team meetings
which will involve the lay worship leaders
and the lay readers
and we will meet
where we can sit down
[and] worship together
and just share with each other
anything that we think we need to work out
with regards to ministering a large ministry area
such as
how are clergy expenses paid?
Do we pay expenses to lay worship leaders
if they travel outside their immediate parish in which they're licensed?
What about lay readers?
that sort of thing
the nitty-gritty.

[21] Literally, 'to the clergy'. An ad clerum is a letter from the bishop to the those who hold his or her licence to minister in the diocese.

Arthur's approach is to reconfigure how the clergy meet by broadening the membership of the group to include lay ministers who also hold the bishop's licence and to shift their conversation away from "grumbling" and instead to focus on "sharing" and things they can change. This sharing, for Arthur, would involve a more in-depth meeting of one another rather than the superficial agreement that is easily reached through grumbling about someone or something else.

Here, Arthur is trying to activate some of the relational practices and leadership possibilities. With deeper sharing, psychological safety may become possible and restructuring the group and redirecting its processes makes that deeper sharing more likely. The extract also demonstrates the innate connection between the habitus of individuals and groups and the social space in which that habitus is exercised. Each one shapes and influences the other. Arthur seeks to reconstitute the nature of the clergy' habitus by changing the social space. This reconfiguration will, in turn, alter the space itself.

3.2.2 Capital

To understand how social exchange is negotiated, Bourdieu advocates the retrieval of the term 'capital' from the world of economics into other forms of exchange (R. Moore, 2014, p. 98). Thus, he proposes a broad distinction between economic and symbolic capital (which, itself, includes sub-types such as social, cultural, scientific, literary, narrative etc.) (R. Moore, 2014, p. 100). The importance of this shift for Bourdieu is demonstrated by his claim that monetary exchange, in its focus on profit, has mostly confined self-interest within narrow financial senses while other forms of exchange, by implication, are portrayed as disinterested (Bourdieu, 2008, pp. 280–281). Such misrecognition arises from the failure to acknowledge forms of exchange beyond the economic.

I experienced these other forms of capital at a Church in Wales pre-retirement course I had arranged for clergy and their spouses. The group were being addressed by a financial consultant on planning for retirement and how to invest their capital for a healthy economic future. One clergy spouse responded to the effect: "But that isn't the sort of capital we have. Our capital is all in the relationships in which we've invested over many years in parish ministry".

According to Bourdieu, misrecognition occurs when the exchange of symbolic forms of capital into power is hidden from sight because it is represented by other cultural values that are viewed, arbitrarily, as of higher worth and 'above' financial exchange. Just as in the economic world, capital in these symbolic senses is mobilised to increase capital, to control, to influence, and to effect action. Further, these other forms of capital have a value that can be exchanged for influence or control etc. So, for example, groups and individuals with low economic capital but high cultural, social or symbolic capital can exercise influence above that determined at a purely economic level.

In a later chapter of this thesis, Andrew describes his growing responsibilities and influence as he moved from being a junior, newly ordained curate, to team vicar and eventually to team rector. The ministerial or priestly capital he acquired over nearly thirty years of ministry was significant for his position as a trainer of new curates and the weight of his impact within the diocese. That acquired capital could operate in the church just as effectively as money (or salary packages for a similar level of responsibility) in the financial world.

Other participants spoke of how, during their early years in ministry, they or their fellow-curates had been made to feel subordinate to their training incumbent. They had low ministerial or priestly capital compared to the incumbent and were not allowed to forget it -- to the detriment of their confidence and development as ministers and priests. Likewise, my experience at St Michael's College of organising an annual conference for the Readers[22] of the Province[23] tells me that many of these lay ministers are made to feel the same sort of subordination; they are reminded in various ways that they possess low ministerial capital. Consequently, their sense of psychological safety is diminished and their contribution is often lost to the parish.

[22] Readers (formely Lay Readers) are lay ministers who are trained theologically and licenced to parishes by the Bishop as preachers under the direction of the incumbent. Often they exercise a ministry that is broader in scope than preaching alone.
[23] Over the ten years I was involved, between 80 and 120 from across the Province would usually attend each year.

Bourdieu argues further that cultural, social, and symbolic capital accrues to individuals and groups through the arbitrary valuing of certain conventions, norms, and styles above others. Thus, in his research on the field of education, he highlights how middle and upper-class values are built into the educational system so that these values are reproduced in succeeding generations. Such "reproduction" ensures that controlling groups maintain control and continue to exercise power. That is, they continue to accrue cultural, symbolic, social and economic capital because their values are seen to be of the highest worth in the social field (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, Chapter 3).

Ann also speaks of this phenomenon with regard to the lack of experienced women priests applying for positions of leadership in the Church in Wales. She refers to it as "unconscious bias" – how our received use of language has been formed by past assumptions and continues to mould the present invisibly because we have not examined what seems 'normal'.

> I really would long for the day
> when I could go to a meeting
> and not count the number of women
>
> I've done that for years
> I've never been surprised.
>
> So that it's never an issue about —
> it's just really ordinary
> you know
> that women really genuinely can say
> "I've never had a problem like that"
> That that is true across the board.
>
> I really would like us to get over that
> to be properly inclusive
> properly inclusive
> so that people are just people.

And we're nowhere [near it]
that's a leadership thing
unconscious bias
that's the thing we keep talking about
at the moment.

There was an article about job adverts
why women don't apply for certain jobs
and it was about schools I think
but there's still that language
which is seen as a sort of macho thing
so it's a job for men
strong leadership

And so you talk about development
you use the fluffy words
[and] then women apply

And they may be thrusting
go-get-them sort of women,
but they won't apply for a job
that says [strong leadership's] what we want
because it sounds like a bloke.

So we've got a long way to go really
to encourage women to do more things
we're still on the exceptional women really.

For Ann, the problem is not with the presence or absence of particular skills and qualities that women bring to ministry. The lack is not in women. It is how the assumptions, present in the language of the adverts, are not neutral. The advert is fashioned so that the symbolic capital of stereotypical male qualities is valued and subsequently sought and reproduced unconsciously. Thus, the Church in Wales continues to replicate the expectation of traditional male patterns of leadership in ministry despite its outward acceptance of women in the threefold order of ministry.

Consequently, seniority, maleness, and ordination are categories that arbitrarily accrue high symbolic and cultural capital in the church relative to those who are less experienced, female, or lay. In Bourdieu's terms, they are the categories that have 'distinction' and that tend to be reproduced within the system. However, if collaborative practice aims for the inclusion of the broadest range of gifts and skills, then valuing and reproducing only certain attributes both limits creative possibilities and demotivates those who do not possess the right sort or volume of symbolic capital.

3.2.3 Field

Field is the third component of Bourdieu's scheme and describes the social space in which individuals and groups operate and live. He refers to it as a competitive space, as in a sports field for example, where players vie for capital via the outworking of their habitus. Just as in sport, there are rules together with often unwritten regularities and conventions that a player must negotiate to develop 'a feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 64f). Through such negotiation, a player may attain a well-developed habitus within the field and, thereby, accrue more cultural capital. Due to the likenesses and overlaps between fields the strategies of a player with a good 'feel for the game' may operate as 'double plays', increasing cultural capital in more than one field at a time (Bourdieu, 1996, pp. 271–272; Thomson, 2014, pp. 70–71).

Ann, recollecting her experience of two fields of ministry, chaplaincy and parish, compares how the former was a more satisfying and enjoyable experience than the latter. In chaplaincy, the rules of the game, or the "force-field" (to use another of Bourdieu's metaphors), seems to be much less constricting and difficult to negotiate.

> If I look back on my ministry
> the nicest job in the world
> was when I was the chaplain in *N.*
> that was such a lovely job.

And when I look back on it
what was lovely
the difference that came before and after
was that most of my time
was spent not doing services
not with Anglicans
and not even with people of faith.

You just networked with all the people
whose interests overlapped with yours
so obviously
the pastoral system —
and it was proper mission.

And once you get locked into parish
it takes up so much of your energy
so that's what I loved
I mean
I've I enjoyed all my ministry
but when I look back on it
that was the one I that I've really enjoyed.

The chaplaincy was [great]
I was the only full-timer
so although in theory
we didn't have a leader of the team
because I was in every day
that's how it worked.

But that was an ecumenical group
and we were freed from lots of things
in that context
and we trusted one another
and we simply —
we would talk
until we had agreed on something

that we would do
and it would be something
that I would have to enable
because I was in all the time.

It was a classic form
of that feminist model
of all taking it in turns
to take roles
that nobody is the boss

So it was just very freeing
and we did lots of ecumenical work.

In the field of chaplaincy, Ann describes being free of what she perceives as the energy-sapping elements of parish ministry. Elsewhere in the interview, she outlined those elements to include buildings and faculties, church council, and diocesan meetings. As a chaplain, other departments took care of many of these sorts of practicalities, and she was free to network and connect with all sorts of people – of faith, no faith, and other faiths. Working with the other chaplains, she was able to exercise a model of leadership that was "feminist" and involved sharing or "turn-taking" to the effect that they trusted one another. Earlier in the interview, she illustrated this turn-taking with an experience of involvement with an extended women's demonstration against one particular government policy.

A policeman
    it was always a policeman
would come up and say
"who's in charge here?"
and we would delight in saying
"no one's in charge
we all look after one another."

Again, the field structure of the demonstration group was coherent with the style of the women's habitus of relating and working together, and they only experienced

discord when they came up against other fields like law-enforcement with its different, hierarchical habitus and a more traditional approach to gender.

The implications for collaborative ministry is that some field structures are more conducive to its practice than others. The question is, how can field structures be shaped to produce the required habitus? Neither field structure nor habitus is petrified; each is historically contingent[24] and evolving; each exerts influence over and shapes the other. However, because of the inequalities in the distribution of capital and thus of power, the existing field structure tends to be reproduced. I now turn to a fuller consideration of this aspect.

3.2.3.1 A field of struggles

Ann's experience of a feminist form of shared or distributed leadership (Mehra, Smith, Dixon, & Robertson, 2006; West, 2012, Chapter 4 sec. "Self-managing … teams"), on the face of it, may seem to contradict Bourdieu's argument regarding competition within a field. Bourdieu emphasises that the outcome of the contest within a field determines whether and how much the field changes.

> As a space of potential and active forces, the field is also a field of struggles aimed at preserving or transforming the configuration of these forces (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 101).

However, Ann also described a separate instance, in a parish context, whereby another female priest joined the team, and the team discovered that "she didn't want to play ball with any of us". In Ann's experience, it seems that within the field of chaplaincy, it was more straightforward to trust one another and work through problems. Ann's use of the phrase "once you get locked into parish, it takes up so much of your energy", evokes the increased sense of constriction and limited room for manoeuvre within that field. We might conjecture how the single-issue of the demonstration group and possibly lesser complexity of the active forces in chaplaincy compared to those in a parish, contributed to a lessening of the contest

[24] Here, Bourdieu uses the example of the development of the game of rugby in both England and France: in England (in the recent past) the game has had something of an elite past, whereas in France (as in Wales) "it has become the characteristic sport of the working and middle classes" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 209). Thus there is a need for "a sociology that is historically aware and informed" (Schubert, 2014, p. 183).

in those fields. Certainly, the women's demonstration group encountered contest within the containing field of law enforcement. Also, even the most harmonious of groups are, at times, places of dispute and competition.

There is a further reason to be cautious about assuming that women's groups will be automatically less competitive and more participative. The supposition that women's leadership is different from men's, being naturally more collaborative than authoritarian, is widely contested, and many commentators warn against simplistic stereotyping according to gender (e.g. Le Hir, 2000, p. 127). The critical issue is that differences in leadership style have more to do with personality and learned behaviours than essential gender characteristics (Coleman, 2012, Chapter Introduction; Ward, 2008, Chapter 5).

The crucial issue is that as a culture, we emphasise only certain types of leadership style; significantly, those that are most often associated with men. Lewis-Anthony (2013), for instance, argues that the leadership myth by which we live (Midgley, 2003) is predominantly of the strong, heroic, rugged individual so often portrayed in film and literature (Justin Lewis-Anthony, 2013, Chapters 3, 7). Similarly, Wink (1998) sees in much of our media, politics, and culture "the myth of redemptive violence" whereby the vicious Babylonian creation myth[25] is continually reinvented in film and television and replayed in our personal, social, and political life (Chapter 2). That these myths do not determine how things will be is demonstrated in Ann's description of women who are "go-getters" and in both Simon and John's longing for a more participative style of leadership.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss how the three women interviewees felt that they did not fit the "mould" of a typical male cleric. One way of interpreting their experience is to see it as an example of a Bourdieusian struggle within the field of the church. The ordination of women to the ministry of the church introduces into the system of the church people who are culturally more attuned to alternative styles of

[25] Wink also sees in this myth how the female is represented as a force of chaos to be dominated and suppressed by the violence of the male. Further, he contrasts the Babylonian myth where the earth is created through an act of violence with the Hebrew creation myths that speak of goodness and relationality.

leadership. While some men may also be attuned to these styles, they are more likely to feel that they should emulate the culturally dominant, 'male' model. As Bourdieu states, the struggle centres around the transformation or the preservation of the field.

3.2.4 Field-habitus mismatch and hysteresis[26]

During times of social change when field conditions are altering many 'players' will experience field-habitus mismatch. Then the struggles (or competition) for preservation or transformation of the field will be at their most apparent. Moreover, an effect Bourdieu refers to as hysteresis (a lag) will come into operation as players resist the field changes, adapt their habitus, or withdraw from the field altogether (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 142–143; C. Hardy, 2014a, pp. 126–145). We can reflect here on the cycles of structural change that have happened in recent decades in fields such as education and health and that are now happening within the Church in Wales in its push to develop ministry areas.

Through the interviews, I heard of my participants' experiences of displacement and lack of connection to the hierarchy. Their emotions are often derived from this sense of field-habitus mismatch and of having become a 'fish out of water' (Maton, 2014, p. 56). With the change to Ministry Areas, the expectations on a parish priest have shifted from a pastoral ministry of word and sacrament within a single parish and community to managing a large group of churches together with a team of ministers both lay and ordained. Likewise, the titles have shifted from being Rector or Vicar to Ministry Area Leader.

Arthur, acting as a fairly recently appointed Area Dean / Ministry Area Leader, relates the frustration of having to organise rotas among the clergy of the ministry area who have formerly served independently within their smaller areas of responsibility.

> We're at the practicalities stage now.
>
> How can we make this rota work better?

[26] "The phenomenon in which the value of a physical property lags behind changes in the effect causing it …" (Definition of hysteresis in English)

> Who's going to do the rota?
> it's a job I'm desperate to dump.
>
> Are you available? No
> Are you available? No
> Can you do eight-thirty? No
> but I can do ten thirty
> And I'm thinking – Ohhh God!
>
> And it's not that it's a difficult task but
> you could take up the whole day
> you think
> is this a good use of my time?
> It's a different mindset for the clerics.

Arthur goes on to say that he would like to appoint a part-time administrator but also reports that finances are already stretched, and so there is uncertainty regarding that happening. Also, he perceives a shift in where responsibilities lie:

> The man-management thing
> which at one time was archdeacons' [work]
> is now starting to devolve to area deans.

Persistent field-habitus mismatch like this aggregates, with time, to a sense that the rules of the game have altered and that 'I' no longer fit into the system in the same way. What may follow is a pattern of sitting it out until retirement, grim bafflement at the changes, or deep cynicism about the institution. For those who do manage to adapt to the new rules and regularities of the field, re-framing of the construct of priesthood and ministry is often necessary and painful (Fransella & Dalton, 1990; Hull, 1985, pp. 32–34,102–145).

3.2.5 Symbolic violence

Among the important themes discussed by Bourdieu is how language forms and maintains a social field through symbolic rather than physical domination. He describes the result of such domination as symbolic violence, "where it is the dominated who is obliged to adopt the language of the dominant" (Bourdieu &

Wacquant, 1992, p. 143)[27]. The notion of reproduction (discussed above under the heading Capital) comes about in the way language categorises and orders the social world. Competition and struggle result from attempts to justify and sustain one form of categorisation over another. For Bourdieu, all such classifications are cultural, historical, and subjective – they constitute one of many valid ways of 'seeing' the world.

> Symbolic violence is thus a generally unperceived form of violence and, in contrast to systems in which force is needed to maintain social hierarchy, is an effective and efficient form of domination in that members of the dominant classes need exert little energy to maintain their dominance (Schubert, 2014, p. 179).

Thus, the attempt by a diocesan hierarchy to promote the new habitus of ministry areas by adjusting the existing field of the diocese can be perceived as "a complete branding exercise" (John) that generates negative emotions. As John reported, "I'm not sure what's behind [the branding] … and it just turns me off completely. I long for it to be a bit more real and to be a bit more grounded and [for them] to actually realise that this is going to be a tough battle [to change]". John, like other participants, hears the language used to justify the changes and recognises the theological imperative of promoting mission, greater collaboration, and a stronger role for the laity. However, he also feels that the spur to the changes has come from anxiety about a drastic drop in clergy numbers, questions of financial viability, and dramatically declining congregations. He experiences the mismatch between the "branding" and the underlying concerns as a form of manipulation and longs for it "to be a bit more grounded" and honest.

Likewise, even appeals to the New Testament often function as a form of symbolic violence because of the simplistic way in which the text is interpreted. The frequent appeal to Paul's body of Christ metaphor concerning relations in the church (e.g. 1 Corinthians 12) sends a powerful message that competition and struggle are out of

[27] Bourdieu here gives the example of "the relation between standard, white English and the black American vemacular … In this case, the dominated speaks a broken language … and his linguistic capital is more or less completely devalued, be it in school, at work, or in social encounters with the dominant" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 143).

place and unchristian. The resulting culture of 'niceness' that is expected of both the ordained and lay stifles deep communication and appreciation of diversity and difference. (Lederach, 1999, pp. 99–117; Savage, 2006, pp. 22–27).

Such a culture of niceness and its attendant distaste for conflict creates a space where the powerful can mask their symbolic capital (sometimes even to themselves) and become 'successful' in the church's field of struggles.

There are, however, good examples of those who see in the gospels (and especially Matthew 18) a church working through issues of conflict, forgiveness and church order (e.g. Dunn, 1999). Whatever the original community situation that Matthew was addressing, it is clear that conflict and church discipline (e.g. Matthew 18) were high on the agenda from the beginning (Luz, 1995, pp. 104–108). Similarly, in the Corinthian church, we see that the body of Christ imagery is clearly addressing a tense and conflicted community (Furnish, 1999, pp. 30f, 89–91). To appropriate New Testament verses and language as a simple descriptor of how things ought to be (e.g. Harries et al., 2012, pp. 2–3) fails to recognise that language's location within first-century social fields, habitus and capital. Conversely, to identify Paul's writing as an appeal to live out a different sort of economics (Selby, 1997, p. 154) is to employ symbolic capital originating out of divine gift, and to develop a habitus shaped by the Spirit. Such a habitus could allow the social field of the present-day church to be transformed and its practices to be grace-filled.

Bourdieu's characterisation of a field as a place of contest and struggle is, therefore, helpful in the process of understanding the field of the Church and unmasking our use and misuse of Biblical texts and other authorities as symbolic capital. In particular, it challenges us to go beyond simple readings of biblical texts and their appropriation for narrow self-interest. At the end of chapter 2, I discussed Paul's exhortation in Romans 12-14, and we can now understand his argument under the banner of a habitus of love. In effect, he envisages an idealised field of the church where field, structure and habitus are aligned, so that love and mutuality are possible.

3.2.6 Interest

Bourdieu's thinking tools prompt us, then, to be reflexive in our practices within the church in order to perceive how we may be experiencing field-habitus mismatch or unconsciously using symbolic violence to dominate. Importantly, recognising a field as a place of contest (a game, to use one of Bourdieu's favoured analogies) permits us to acknowledge our personal interest in the social exchanges of that field. Bourdieu makes considerable use of this concept of interest to demonstrate how "individuals act to maximize profit" (Grenfell, 2014b, p. 152). He states that:

> To be interested is to accord a given social game that what happens in it matters, that its stakes are important … and worth pursuing (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 116) … [Further,] each field calls forth and gives life to a specific form of interest … as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules (p. 117).

Thus, the kind of capital available varies according to the nature of the field (or game) and, insofar as individuals are committed to a particular field, they act out their habitus to increase their capital "to define and improve their position" (Grenfell, 2014b, p. 152) – hence they have an interest and compete. The question is, is this competition compatible with a Christian ethic of love? Does it permit us to move beyond suspicion of motive and interest?

3.3 The challenge of Bourdieu for Christian theology

3.3.1 Is Bourdieu just a cynic?

When reading Bourdieu, one can be easily overwhelmed by what seems to be his rather bleak reading of social phenomena and his scepticism about supposedly disinterested acts. On the face of it, he might easily be ranked among the "masters of suspicion", along with Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud (Ricoeur, 1970, pp. 32–33). However, we can also follow Ricoeur's approach in dealing with the above three "masters". That is, we can acknowledge Bourdieu's suspicion about disinterestedness, and so on, without going down the path of dismissing it as mere scepticism. It is a moment of disillusionment, perhaps, but only in the sense of no longer living with an illusion. With Ricoeur's view of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, we can view Bourdieu as "clear[ing] the horizon for a more authentic word, for a new

reign of Truth, not only by means of a "destructive" critique, but by the invention of an art of *interpreting*" (p. 33). Hence, for our purposes, Bourdieu's approach becomes a hermeneutic for reading the church as an organisation and seeing how its dominant narratives frequently undermine the practice of collaborative ministry. Importantly, it is a hermeneutic that invites more profound and rigorous reflexive practice, and, I would hold, a sharper spirituality than might otherwise be the case.

3.3.2 Grace and generosity?

As stated above, Bourdieu's firm emphasis on contest and interest within a field presents a considerable challenge to Christian theological reflection regarding the themes of virtue, grace and generosity – ideas that have, at their heart, concerns for disinterestedness, selflessness, and sacrificial love. Bourdieu sees competition present in every field, and he, himself asks the question, "Is a disinterested act possible?" (Bourdieu, 1998b, Chapter 4). Even in supposedly disinterested fields, he sees interest at work:

> I would recall a sculpture found at the Auch cathedral, in the Gers, which represents two monks struggling over the prior's staff. In a world which, like the religious universe, and above all the monastic universe, is the site par excellence of … the extraworldly of disinterestendness (sic) in the naive sense of the term, one finds people who struggle over a staff, whose value exists only for those who are in the game, caught up in the game (p. 78).

Moreover, he recounts the uproar provoked when his work is applied to worlds, such as the intellectual world of France, that pride themselves on disinterestedness (p. 75). Similarly, when I have asked clergy groups if they are powerful, their instinct is to deny it, as to own it would be to express interest within a field that purports to promote service and put others first.

Bourdieu also maintains that those with a well-developed habitus "have a feel for the game, [and] in games where it is necessary to be "disinterested" in order to succeed, they can undertake, in a spontaneously disinterested manner, action in accordance with their interests"(p. 83). In the world of art, for instance, it is often stated that "the end of art is art, art has no other end than art" (p. 83), yet

competition for patronage or membership of art societies are rife. Again, a state's civil service ("the bureaucratic field") typically endorses the ideal that "social agents have no personal interest and sacrifice their own interests to the public, to public service" (p. 84). Even here, Bourdieu states, not everything is governed by disinterestedness, "there are subtle, camouflaged interests", making it possible for the civil service to operate for the convenience of the "the bureaucrat … who puts the state at his service" (p. 87). Consequently, Bourdieu asks the question:

> Is a sociology of these universes whose fundamental law is disinterestedness (in the sense of a refusal of economic interest) still possible? For it to be possible, there must exist a form of interest that one can describe, for the sake of communication, and at the risk of falling into a reductionist vision, as interest in disinterestedness or, better still, as a disinterested or generous disposition. (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 85).

Here Bourdieu describes the interest in disinterestedness as grounded in and being concerned with symbolic capital – such as the "generous disposition". Within a field, that symbolic capital must itself be prized as worth attaining. Further, it must be supported by the field structures and lived out (or at least the attempt made) via the habitus of a majority of the field's players.

> The question of the possibility of virtue can be brought back to the question of the social conditions of possibility of the universes in which the durable dispositions for disinterestedness may be constituted and, once constituted, may find objective conditions for constant reinforcement and become the principle of a permanent practice of virtue. Within such universes, in the same sense, virtuous actions regularly exist with a decent statistical frequency and not in the form of the heroism of a few virtuous people (p. 87-88)

3.3.3 Virtue

Virtue, then, is possible from Bourdieu's point of view. It is achieved where the field structures promote and support it, *and* where it is lived out in the habitus of the bulk of the community. Here, Bourdieu's thinking comes close to that of MacIntyre

(2007) who views the virtues as being formed within institutions that value virtue in and of itself (Chapter 14, para. 34).

For Macintyre, practices are the complex, cooperative social activities that nurture, shape, and strengthen the virtues (Chapter 14, para 21). Moreover, "[t]o enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point" (Chapter 14, para 36). Importantly, MacIntyre sees an intimate relationship between practices and institutions: "for no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions" (Chapter 14, para 37). Conversely, institutions need the protection of the virtues, nurtured and developed through practices, in order to guard against their tendency to greed and competition: "Without them, without [the virtues of] justice, courage and truthfulness, practices could not resist the corrupting power of institutions" (Chapter 14, para. 37).

MacIntyre also distinguishes between what he terms the external and internal goods of a practice. The former "when achieved … are always some individual's property and possession". They may be tangible things like money or property or intangible like fame and power – the critical thing is that the more one person has, the less there is for others. For the latter, "their achievement is a good for the whole community who participate in the practice" (Chapter 14, para. 26). Significantly, "in any society which recognized only external goods competitiveness would be the dominant and even exclusive feature" (Chapter 14, para. 40). Macintyre's distinction between internal and external goods helps us to understand how Bourdieu's concept of habitus may speak, too, of virtue through the achievement of internal goods.

For Bourdieu, one of the few places where such virtue is possible is "the family and the whole economy of domestic exchanges … in which the law of economic interest is suspended" (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 88). However, even here, there are exchanges taking place, at the very least at an emotional level. Following MacIntyre, we need not anticipate that these emotional exchanges are necessarily manipulative or selfish. If the family habitus is directed toward such internal goods as mutual

support, encouragement, forgiveness and love, then virtuous, disinterested acts may, in fact, result in the fulfilment of our own best interests.

3.3.4 Solidarity

In addition to the view outlined in previous paragraphs, of Bourdieu as a master of suspicion, there are occasions in his writing when his own commitments break out. For instance, in his book, *Acts of Resistance Against the New Myths of Our Time* (1998), he draws together a series of short articles that "were written or spoken as contributions to movements and moments of resistance". He expresses the hope "that they can still provide useful weapons to all those who are striving to resist the scourge of neo-liberalism" (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. vii).

Solidarity is one of the themes that Bourdieu articulates robustly, especially concerning economic policies of austerity and what he describes as the "return of the individual", which:

> makes it possible to 'blame the victim', who is entirely responsible for his or her own misfortune, and to preach the gospel of self-help, all of this being justified by the endlessly repeated need to reduce costs for companies (p. 7).

Elsewhere, he seeks to unmask public discourse that lazily or maliciously conflates Islam with terrorism (e.g. pp. 21-23). Such corrosive use of language, he reflects, has raised the "threshold of tolerance of racist insults and contempt" and its effect is to "insidiously reinforc[e] all the habits of thought and behaviour inherited from more than a century of colonialism and colonial struggles" (p. 22).

Here we see Bourdieu, not as a theoretician, detached and remote from the world of action. On the contrary, he sees his model not so much as a theory of society but as a set of "thinking tools" (Wacquant, 1989, p. 50) to analyse social phenomena. The background of his efforts is the France of his day (Grenfell, 2014a, p. 15) and with these thinking tools, Bourdieu can undertake the work of "uncovering, disenchantment, or demystification", which "can only be accomplished in the name of the same values of civil virtue … with which the unveiled reality is at variance" (Bourdieu, 1998b, p. 145).

In chapter five, I will discuss the radical critique of power, institutions, organisations, and culture articulated by Stringfellow, Wink, and Bonhoeffer. In different ways, each turned to the formation of wholesome communities as the antidote and means to resist the dysfunctionality and oppression of "the powers". Correspondingly, Bourdieu's purpose is to "hold accountable" the powers and systems of domination by unmasking their control (p. 145) via language and embodied frameworks of thought. Like those three figures above, he remains hopeful that solidarity and collective action can offer a way through the troubles of the present:

> And so if one can retain some reasonable hope, it is that, in state institutions and also in the dispositions of agents (especially those most attached to these institutions, like the minor state nobility), there still exist forces which, … will … work to invent and construct a social order which is not governed solely by the pursuit of selfish interest and individual profit (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 104).

While not speaking from a Christian perspective, Bourdieu also writes of a "basic belief and hope in the future" as the basis of creating solidarity between people. It is this underlying belief that is needed "in order to rebel, especially collectively, against present conditions, even the most intolerable" (p. 82).

3.4 Practices of faith

3.4.1 An ecclesiology from below

In the above discussion, I have tried to demonstrate how Bourdieu's thinking tools give us a robust means of analysing practices together with a powerful critique of practices within institutions and social structures. I have augmented this with MacIntyre's explanation of the relationship between virtues, goods, practices and institutions to extend the themes of solidarity and co-operative resistance that are only lightly or implicitly developed in Bourdieu's work and yet are an essential characteristic of practice in both Bourdieu and MacIntyre.

G. Moore (2011), drawing on the work of Gerard Mannion, maintains that a focus on practices generates an "ecclesiology from below" that can act as a

counterbalance to a more dominant "ecclesiology from above". In the latter view, the Church is founded by God in Christ and represents a sacred social order that is above and other than the created order. The alternative "ecclesiology from below" describes the church as immersed in and influenced by the social milieu of each age. The benefit of styling the church "from below" is that, "in being more worldly – but incarnationally so, … it is more able to respond to challenges posed from globalisation and pluralism" (p. 46). Additionally, as practices in the schemes of both Bourdieu and MacIntyre are deeply social enterprises, they have the potential to refocus ecclesiology away from an individual clerical paradigm towards a theology of the whole people of God[28].

The Church of England's 2005 review of ministerial formation called for precisely this sort of transformation in theological education. The authors envisaged a turn toward character formation and growth in practical wisdom nurtured in the "historical and corporate" practices of Christian communities:

> This approach is grounded in an understanding of theology as *habitus*[29] which lays the stress not upon the acquisition of knowledge or skills, but upon the development of people of faith within communities that shape Christian living. At all stages of the formational process … [we] envisage … that character … is being transformed in Christ through engagement with self, others, Scripture and the Christian tradition … for the sake of deep knowledge … (Archbishops Council, 2005, p. 60).

3.4.2 "Practicing our Faith"[30]

The Church of England's turn to habitus, character, and practical wisdom resonates strongly with that of the *Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in the Faith* (Valparaiso Project, 2011) and the *Practicing our Faith* series of books arising from it. Two of the principal authors of the project consider the way human existence is "always, concrete, conflicted, and in flux", and reflect on "how a way of life that is deeply responsive to God's grace takes actual shape among

[28] I will return to this theme in later chapters of this thesis.
[29] Italics in the original.
[30] "Practicing our Faith": A way of life for a searching people" (Bass, 2010)

human beings" (Dykstra & Bass, 2002, p. 15). In an age where, perhaps more than ever, western culture draws us more to individualised "*life-styles of abundance* than to *ways of life abundant*[31]" (p. 16), this sort of reflection is critical.

Bass and Dykstra define Christian practice as "things people do together over time to address fundamental human need in response to and in the light of God's active presence for the life of the world" (p. 18). They acknowledge their indebtedness to Alistair MacIntyre's theory of practice but also make a critical distinction: the standards and values, the internal goods of Christian practices, are normalised through the Church's "responsive relationship … to God" (p. 21), not merely by the Church as an institution.

In addressing fundamental human needs, Christian practices "address conditions fundamental to being human – such as embodiment, temporality, relationship, the use of language, and mortality" (p. 22). They are immersed in the knowledge of God and creation (p. 24) and are "attuned to the active presence of God for the life of the world (p. 25). As such, they "share in the mysterious dynamic of fall and redemption, sin and grace" (p. 27). Moreover, "Christian practices … are patterned activities carried on by whole communities of people, not just in one particular location, but across nations and generations" (p. 26). To participate in Christian practices is to embody and grow into our baptismal promises (p. 28) and baptism itself is not one among several practices but "the liturgical summation of all the Christian practices" (p. 30). The consequence of a community responding to its baptismal vocation is that "human needs are not just met; they are transformed" (p. 31). Thus, the practices are fundamentally about participation in the life of God and are:

> … habitations of the Spirit. They are not, finally, activities we do to make something spiritual happen in our lives. Nor are they duties we undertake to be obedient to God. Rather, they are patterns of communal action that create openings in our lives where the grace, mercy, and presence of God may be made known to us. They are places

[31] Italics in the original. I will return to this theme in Chapter 4

> where the power of God is experienced. In the end, these are not ultimately our practices but forms of participation in the practice of God. (Dykstra, 2005, p. 66)

3.4.3 Collaborative working across the practices of faith

It is here that it becomes possible to outline the shape of collaborative working across the Christian practices of the church. In their original volume, Bass and Dykstra with their eleven colleagues pinpointed twelve individual but connected practices: "honoring the body, hospitality, household economics, saying yes and saying no, keeping sabbath, discernment, testimony, shaping communities, forgiveness, healing, dying well, and singing our lives to God" (p. 19). Two of these stand out as of particular importance for collaborative relationships to be fruitful within the life of the church. First, the practice of shaping communities attends to matters of governance and leadership and these will be the subject of the following chapters. Second, hospitality "reflects a willingness on the part of a community of people to be open to others and to their insights, needs and contributions" (Pohl, 2012, Chapter 11, para. 3) – something that is at the heart of collaborative working.

Pohl maintains that the practice of hospitality is a response to the welcome of God and draws on the grace of God, even as that same welcome and mercy extends to the other. It assumes that the unknown stranger is not an enemy but a potential friend and agent of God's blessing[32]. Practising hospitality necessitates other practices, especially of speaking truthfully so that the required trust, vulnerability and transparency are present. Truthfulness, in turn, depends on promise-keeping together with gratitude which roots hospitality in generosity toward and thankfulness for the other – an antidote to the potential for hospitality to become grudging[33] when it is not easy (Chapter 11, para. 1-10).

Marrying the Practices of Faith with Bourdieu's thinking tools could look something like the following. First, it means transforming the field of the church so that high status is ascribed to the internal goods of the virtues of mutual support, relationality, friendship etc. – including all of the elements that make up the

[32] Genesis 18
[33] 1 Peter 4.9

practice of hospitality. In other words, it is making this the capital that is worth accruing. A consequence is a downplaying of the external goods of managerial measures of so-called success – such as crude measurements of "bums on pews". Second, it means that creating and maintaining generative relationships is the means of acquiring this relational capital – building trust is another way to put it. Therefore, the process (or habitus) of discussion, disagreement, and decision making becomes as important (if not more so) than the decisions themselves. The consequence here is that relational processes take time and need priority over immediate outcomes.

3.4.4 Towards a theology of solidarity

From a theological perspective, I want to speak of the Christian community as a community of solidarity and relationship, a communion, and a teleogical community. That is to say, its habitus is cultivated in its life together under God, while the virtues (symbolic capital) it seeks to attain through practices are known and brought about through discernment of God's ultimate purposes for the community. MacIntyre (2007) writes of this intertwining of choice of action and ultimate purpose:

> I can only answer the question 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?' (Chapter 15, para. 34)

Thus, Simon, one of my participants, relates his understanding of how priestly ministry exists to serve the Body of Christ by representing both Christ and his Church (The Faith and Order Advisory Group, 2007, p. 120). Its essential habitus is to call forth the priesthood of the whole body (Macquarrie, 1972, p. 85) and for the Church, in turn, be "representative of a true humanity" (p. 91).

> I think the whole business of collaborative ministry
> it's a lack of imagination, isn't it?
> we imagine that it's always going to be difficult
> and of course sometimes it will be
> because there has got to be this business
> of listening to one another

and letting go of,
you know,
the sort of incumbent as the king
in the middle of the kingdom and all the rest of it.

[And the most valuable aspect of working in a group or team is?]

I think that you have a very positive feeling of collegiality
and as far as ministry is [concerned]
priestly ministry on the one hand
and ministry in a fuller sense on the other hand
that it is about ministering
in, and to a body.

[Say a bit more …]

I was reading
very recently actually
a sermon by Eric James
and it really resonated with me, he said
"I think one of the most important functions
of an ordained priest
is to help other people
ordained and lay people
grow in awareness
that we're all called to be priests to one another
… in the way we relate to one another
and the situations we find ourselves in –
in the world that we live in."

The ordained priesthood is meant to alert,
as it were,
or help other people grow in awareness of
their priestly ministry –
that we are all together the priestly people of God
getting away from the sort of personality cult
that can dance attendance on some

not just priests
but any Christian leader.

I think collegiality is the thing
that I mentioned was important to me.

I understand priesthood as being
you know
part of ministry in a body
and to a body
I would come back very much to this notion of
being alongside people
not over and above them
but alongside.

In this extract, Simon identifies the renewal of the field of the Church and its collaborative habitus as an act of imagination. Andrews (2014) draws attention to the vital importance of this all too easily taken-for-granted concept:

> It is the drive of the imagination which impels us to ask 'if only' of our past, and 'what if' of our futures. When we revisit the past, as we do when we tell stories about our lives, it is our imaginative urge which gives us the ability to contemplate a world that might have been, as well as one which might still be. It is our imagination which gives us the necessary sustenance to create visions of alternative realities (pp. 4-5).

Simon imagines a field of the church where the priest is not "king" or the centre of a "personality cult". Instead, the priest is representative of the calling of all the baptised – and in that sense, representative of Christ. The habitus, here, is one of "listening to one another" because the Church, collectively, is representative of Christ and listening to the Church is to discern Christ. There is, too, a "letting go" of the competitive reach for power and control and a valuing of "collegiality" – a recognition that a common baptism places all Christians on an equal footing within the body of Christ. In effect, Simon's imaginary field of the church has an interest in disinterestedness; it is a field where the internal goods of the virtues of listening and humility are symbolic capital; it is a field where the habitus of individuals and

groups is directed toward the practices of faith and particularly the practice of hospitality where the other and their welfare is of the highest concern.

3.5 Where next?

My purpose in outlining Bourdieu's conception of practice has been to utilise his thinking tools to look more closely at creating a generative team environment within the broader institution. Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, capital, and field enable us to reflect on how individual actions and interest fit into and are shaped by the fields of the church and society. Moreover, with the help of MacIntyre's thinking on virtue and within the theological framework of the Practices of Faith, they also help us to uncover our own interest and point to how virtue can be nurtured and ascribed high symbolic value within a collaborative community. In the next chapter, I will examine some historical and systemic factors shaping the field of the Church in Wales in often unconscious ways.

4 Field analysis of the Church in Wales

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will employ Bourdieu's methods to consider the habitus of individuals and groups within the broader field and 'economy' of the Church in Wales and its six dioceses. This Bourdieusian field analysis will discuss how competition for the forms of capital shapes all levels of church structures and how it differentiates the voice of clergy and laity. Each of my participants' experiences fit within the field of the Church in Wales, and Bourdieu's concepts help to make sense of the dissonance or field-habitus mismatch they so often report.

4.2 Field analysis of the Church in Wales

To study a particular field, Bourdieu proposes an internally connected three-step process:

1. Analyse the relation of the field to other nearby fields and especially to what Bourdieu terms the field of power[34].
2. Analyse the structure(s) of the field itself.
3. Examine the habitus of individuals and groups within the field.
   (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104–105)

The purpose of these steps is to ensure that the interconnected nature of habitus and field together with the flow of capital is examined purposefully. It reminds us that autobiographical data alone is not sufficient for complete analysis (Grenfell, 2014c, p. 223). Further, it acts in some way to counteract a tendency on the part of researchers to apply a superficial "Bourdieusian gloss" to already analysed data (Grenfell, 2014c, p. 226). Bourdieu proceeds to describe the movement through the stages of the process as a "sort of hermeneutic circle" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 108).

For the purposes of my argument, I will discuss these steps in reverse order. In reality, the progression of my thinking has not been linear but has been more like

[34] Bourdieu uses the term "the field of power" to designate a very particular subset of social space. The field of power is constituted differently from other fields because it is occupied only by the most dominant individuals in a social space" (C. Hardy, 2014b, p. 233)

an “endless to and fro movement in the research process that is quite lengthy and arduous” (p. 108).

4.2.1 The habitus of my interviewees

4.2.1.1 Promise

Listening to and interpreting my participants’ stories and reflections, I have been conscious of how each of them has been living out the “the promissory character of ministry” begun at their ordination (Pickard, 2009, p. 207). At the beginning of each interview, I asked them to recount their initial sense of call to ministry and subsequent journey to ordination. Most had the classic sequence of Christian calling: divine encounter/revelation, disbelief/resistance, prayer/testing, obedience/promise. From each participant, there was a deep sense of the importance of that initial call, the promise of God and their responding promises.

Pickard emphasises the distinction between resolve and promise by drawing on the Latin roots of the word:

> To promise, … (from *promittere* – to send forth) is a movement outward, a sending forth of the self. The word of promise is an embodied outer-directed movement of the self. This involves trust, risk and service to the other. The journey from ‘resolve’, ‘public profession’, ‘commitment’ to promise requires a move from self-centred to other-centred (p. 216).

Pickard takes up Hannah Arendt’s notion of the promise as a means of dealing with the unpredictability and the “chaotic uncertainty of the future” (p. 217). He also utilises Paul Ricoeur’s understanding that “personal identity retains its permanence through time through the twin coordinates of character and promise” (p. 217). Following Moltmann, Pickard finds the source and validation of the promise in “The God of the Promise … [whose] essence is not his absoluteness as such, but the faithfulness with which he reveals and identifies himself in the history of his promise as ‘the same’” (J. Moltmann, 1967, p. 143).

Thus, the worship of the God of the promise, together with participation in the worshipping community, is fundamental to the promissory character of both

baptism and ordination. All of these elements are brought together and intensified in the rites of both baptism and ordination, the public promise being made possible only with the rider “by God’s grace” or “with the help of God”, and confirmed by “the people’s ‘Amen and the laying on of hands” (Pickard, 2009, pp. 221–223). The symbolic capital of ordination, indeed of an intentional Christian life, is not found in status or the goods of consumerism but as a faithful response to “the God of the Promise”.

4.2.1.2 Navigating the promise

It is in the daily realities of parish life, together with being part of a diocese and the broader field of the Church in Wales, that I have both experienced for myself, and witnessed in colleagues, a powerful desire to live out these ordination promises. It is not a straightforward or clear pathway to follow, as my participants have demonstrated in earlier chapters. In addition, research in the Church of England on the lived experience of clergy resonates strongly with the experience of my participants, both in the interview conversations and my broader knowledge of their ministry. In a significant and recent study of Church of England parish clergy, Peyton & Gatrell (2013) observe that “clergy have soldiered on, keeping the parochial system alive despite their possible professional marginalization as the generalists of last resort” (p. 178). In effect, they live out a commitment to “becoming” priestly within a particular locality and community. According to Peyton and Gatrell, “[p]erhaps ‘priest’ is better understood as a verb rather than a noun” (p. 178). They also found that a majority of their participants, and across the spectrum of church traditions, have a sense of their vocation as something life-changing and permanent.

Significantly, the outworking of this sacrificial, lifelong calling has a twofold aspect: “Priestly identity is characterized by obedient clergy bodies, not simply instrumental to the Church as an organization but theologically governed by clergy souls” (p. 123). This latter conclusion connects closely with my observation of my participant's habitus as a tension between an idealised habitus centred around the New Testament texts and a lived experience of responding to the imperfect reality

of the church as an organisation and the marginalised position it occupies in contemporary society.

This field-habitus mismatch results from the expectation generated using New Testament metaphors for relationships in the church compared with the actual everyday experience. For instance, the Body of Christ metaphor in the New Testament often conflicts with the lived reality of church life. In the former vision, diversity of race, gender, personality, skill, function, role, and so on, are encouraged alongside a commitment to fundamental equality in Christ. In the latter reality, competition and struggle are rife in the field (with the attendant interest and exchanges of symbolic capital) even while the (disinterested) language of the Body of Christ is employed.

Peyton & Gatrell (2013) perceive that within this twofold aspect, clergy engage in a quest for an authentic priestly identity. One the one hand there exists the knowledge of their own and the church's imperfection. On the other hand, there is the knowledge of being present before God in the attempt to live out their ordination vows. Significantly, Peyton and Gatrell observe how this tension is all lived out in the public eye (Chapter 6).

The former Bishop of Oxford, John Pritchard, likewise notes that this quest for authentic priestly identity is a particular form of attempting to live a genuine human and Christian life (Pritchard, 2007, p. 149). He concludes by drawing attention to the positive, energising effect of the idealised spiritual habitus when the toil in the field of struggles seems overwhelming:

> When ministry is hard and people seem unresponsive … it's a time to return to the confidence that God has called us to be here, now, and nowhere else … [and that] he works even through the bewildering and arcane processes of the Church … Moreover, we have this high, thrilling and dangerous calling to be 'thin' people, on the boundary of heaven and earth, handling the high beauty of Bible, sacrament and prayer. Why should we want to do anything else? (Pritchard, 2007, p. 159)

Simon, one of the interviewees, views the priest as a representative of the calling of all the baptised. He also speaks of the collegial habitus of the priest who works within and amongst the body of Christ – in effect, acting as a catalyst for genuine collaborative practices to exist.

Along with Peyton & Gatrell (2013), I want to affirm my participants' commitment to the implications of their ordination vows. I see in their responses a "positive staying power" (p. 1) and a commitment to the collaborative life of congregations. That commitment and staying power are, I believe, borne on their habitus of embodied prayer and worship, solidarity with their communities, and a sacrificial openness or hospitality towards friends and strangers.

4.2.1.3 Summary – habitus

In examining the habitus of individuals in the Church in Wales, I have been limited by my choice of a clergy only dataset. Thus, the discussion above has focussed on priests and their vocational calling. That is an acknowledged limitation of the scope of this project. Recently, however, I have led a more widespread consultation within the diocese of Llandaff that includes a significant number of lay voices. The preliminary analysis of that dataset resonates strongly with the themes from my interviewees. Namely, there is a desire for a closer connection, mutual support, and working together of clergy and laity. Like the clergy, many lay people speak of early, significant influences on their Christian formation, and their desire to see a church engaged with the world. Many of the lay respondents also have an idealised habitus of what the church should be like and long for its realisation in the face of both numerical decline and what they perceive as inflexible church structures.

4.2.2 Mapping the structure of the field

In this step of the field analysis, the relative positions of individuals and groups are expressed in terms of the flow and exchange of the various forms of capital – economic and symbolic. The economic refers to the flow of money, the symbolic (including sub-types such as cultural and social capital) to properties stemming from, for example, education, family background, age, career path, language (Grenfell, 2014c, p. 222). Of importance, too, is the history of the field for "we cannot grasp [the structure) without a historical, that is, genetic analysis of its

constitution and of the tensions that exist between positions in it" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 90).

Accordingly, I will reflect on how competition is structured in the various domains of the Church in Wales; how different voices (principally lay and ordained) are ascribed differing volumes of symbolic capital; and how the history of the Constitution has impacted upon field characteristics.

4.2.2.1 Competition

As stated in Chapter 5, Bourdieu considers that competition for the various forms of capital is ubiquitous within a field. The diagram below highlights the three principal

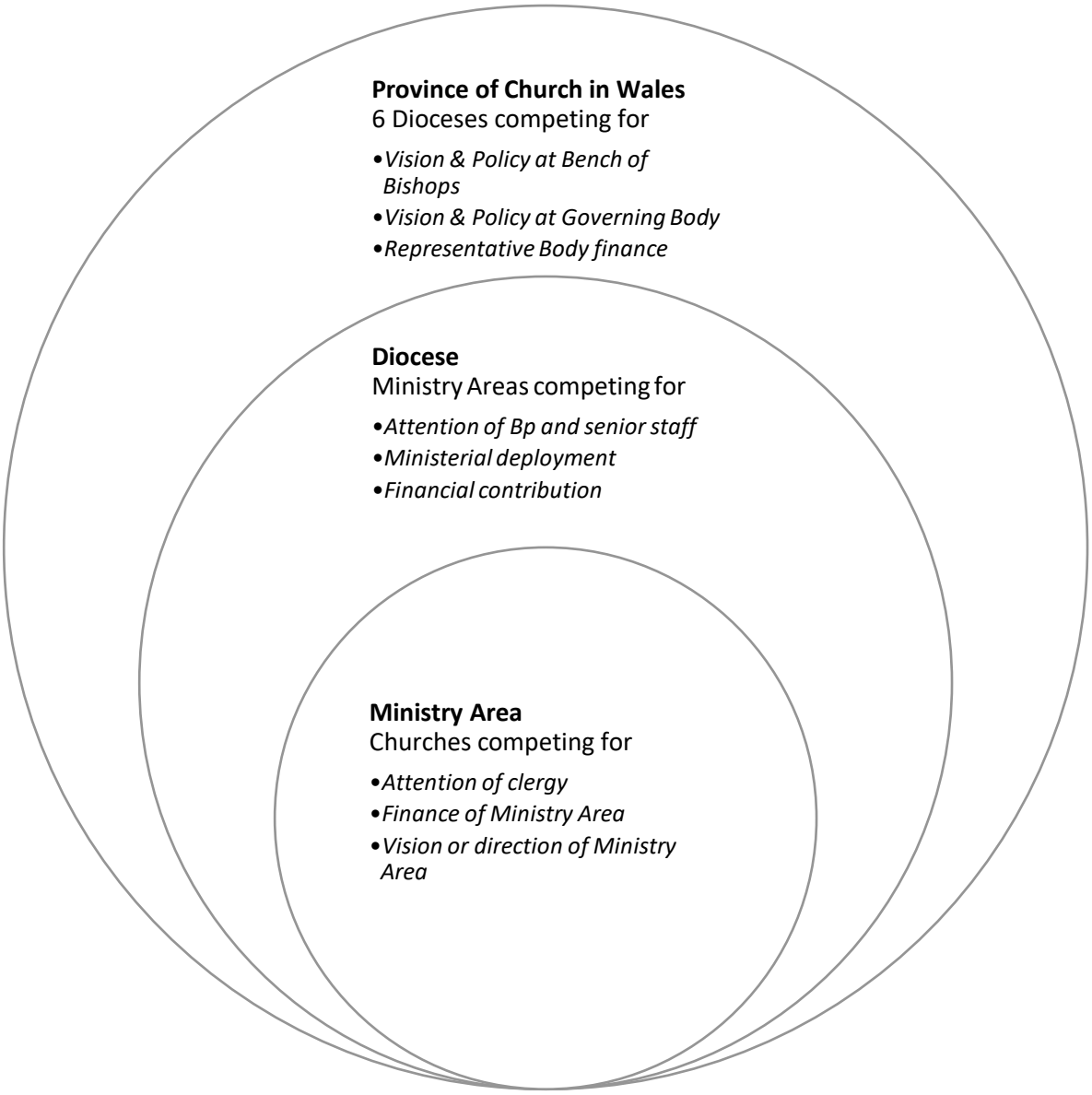

Figure 1: Competition in the Church in Wales

domains of the Church in Wales – the Province with its six dioceses, each diocese comprised of its Ministry Areas, and each Ministry Area with its individual churches. Within each domain, competition is taking place for the attention of those who are deemed to have power, for vision and policy, and the flow of money. For instance, at the time of writing, the six dioceses are submitting bids to the Representative Body for financial support from the ten million pound Evangelism Fund established in 2018. It is unclear at this point whether the 'pot' will be divided into six equal portions or according to some other category such as population distribution. The method of dividing it up will reveal the varying Bourdeiusian interests of each diocese.

4.2.2.2 Voice

A related category to competitive rivalry is the relative strength of voice of different groups of people. The spreadsheet at Appendix G utilises one of Bourdieu's approaches to mapping field structures. By plotting the relevant institutions and individuals of the field against their significant properties, it becomes possible to "think relationally [about] both the social units under consideration and their properties". The purpose is to sidestep the trap of the preconceived idea (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 230–231).

While Appendix G is not the easiest or most instructive to read, its value for me has been in its construction. In particular, it has enabled me to see in a new way how the 'lay voice' is minimised at all levels of the Church in Wales. The area where it has equality (sometimes significance) is in matters of property, law and finance in places like the Representative Body and Diocesan Boards of Finance. Overall, the theological expression of the laity is weak; that of the clergy is strong. Again, this seems obvious. However, to see my own theological education as symbolic capital capable of a high level of exchange within the Church makes it powerful in uncomfortable ways. It also begs the question of the place of the laity within the Church.

4.2.2.3 Lle'r Lleygwr – The layman's place

On the 25th of May 1962, R. Gerallt Jones wrote in his weekly column for *Y Llan*[35] concerning *Lle'r lleygwr* (the layman's place). He began by quoting from a similar publication from May 1862, one hundred years earlier, and cited the earlier columnist's concern[36] about the absence of lay involvement in the church:

> Un diffyg yn yr Eglwys yn ddiau ydyw, nad yw'r bobl yn cymeryd cymaint o ran yn y gwaith da ag a ddylent, a'u bod yn ei adael yn ormod i'r Offeiriad. ... Gobeithiwn nad oes llawer yng Nghymru yn meddwl mai yr Offeiriad yw yr Eglwys... (R. G. Jones, 2010, p. 239)
>
> *[It is undoubtedly one shortcoming in the church, that the people are not taking as much part in the good work as they should, and that they are leaving it too much to the priest. ... We hope that not many in Wales think that the priest is the church...] (Bing Translate, corrected by Stephen Adams)*

Jones proceeded to discuss the same problem, still present in his own day. He went on to place a challenge before his fellow lay men and women, and to talk about the need to reduce the chasm between the priest and the laity through creating 'part-time priests' (pp. 239-243). In making this particular call, Jones runs into the snare named by his predecessor of equating priesthood with the church. However, his highlighting of the limited place of the laity in the church is accurate. The same concern was highlighted in English a little later by Gibbs & Morton (1964) in their popular volume[37], *God's Frozen People: A Book for-and about-Ordinary Christians*. Seventeen years later, Gibbs was still campaigning for a change: "In many churches we still have no systematic development of the laity, no real educational process in the discipleship of people. It is different for the clergy" (Gibbs, 1981, p. 4). Drawing attention to "Clergy-Laity Tensions", he writes of some clergy still, effectively, setting ordination above baptism. The laity, too, share responsibility for colluding with the status quo and not wanting "to face the implications of a common calling"

[35] The weekly Welsh language publication of the Church in Wales
[36] The publication was Yr Haul and the author used the pseudonym "Gregory"
[37] Its sixth impression is dated September 1965

(p. 4). In many places, including my own churches, these issues have not changed across the decades.

The recent report of the Church of England, *Setting God's People Free* (Lay Leadership Task Group of the Archbishops' Council, 2017), deals with almost exactly the same problem. There have been many comparable reports and articles in the years between 1962 and 2017, similarly detailing the issue (e.g. Church of England Board of Education, 1985; Ferns, 1993; Graham, 2015; R. Williams, 1999). In chapter one, I described the same process of successive reports about collaborative ministry, and it is likely that the one issue will not be solved without the other. The development of collaborative practices cannot be 'done to' the laity – it is a feature of the whole people of God (clergy and laity), or it is nothing at all. Indeed, one of the imperatives for the formation of ministry areas was that this would be both a means of activating the ministry of the whole people of God and the Church becoming more collaborative (Harries et al., 2012, p. 4). Here, the particular history of the Church in Wales regarding the relation of (ordained) ministry to the body of Christ is especially relevant.

4.2.2.4 History

In chapter one (sec. 1.4), I referred to Stephen Pickard's assessment of the continuing influence of RC Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood*[38]. To summarise, Pickard sees in Moberly a twin-track understanding of ministry – that he has both "organic and mechanistic accounts" (Pickard, 2009, p. 54). In the former, Moberly relates ministry to the Body of Christ: "The basis of a true understanding of Church ministry is a true understanding of the Church" (Moberly, 1910, p. 1). Thus, on the organic track, ministry is relational, representative of the whole and ministers "are not intermediaries between the Body and its life". On the contrary, "the great deposit of the spiritual life remains in the Body at large" (p. 68). However, on the latter, mechanical track, Moberly is determined to find an origin and authorisation for ministry, not in the Body, but divinely sourced and from 'above'[39]. He is at pains

[38] First edition published in 1897

[39] Moberly was writing following the Papal Bull of 1896 which declared all Anglican orders to be "absolutely null and utterly void". His book contains an appendix "Upon the recent Roman

to avoid any sense of a human origin for ministry and via a lengthy defence of apostolic succession, emphasising "Divine commission" (p. 102), he declares that:

> any aspiration to ministry in Christ's Church, or attempt to discharge its duties, however otherwise well-intentioned, would be a daring presumption at the first, and in practice a disastrous weakness, in proportion as it was lacking in adequate ground to believe in its own definitely, validly, divinely received authority to minister (Moberly, 1910, p. 102).

Pickard (2009), perceives that Moberly's account of ministry betrays a "two-nature Christology" where there is a sharp division between Christ's divinity and humanity. Moberly, in Pickard's estimation, expresses a view of ministry that reflects this separation (p. 59). It can be argued, too, that despite his argument for representative ministry, Moberly's emphasis on authorisation from above falls into the trap of separating Christ from his body and fails to acknowledge that ministry is representative of both Christ *and* his Church (The Faith and Order Advisory Group, 2007, p. 120).

The significance, here, of Moberly's emphasis on apostolic succession and divine commission of ministry, is in the way it has subsequently influenced the life of the Church in Wales. With disestablishment in 1920, the four Welsh dioceses were separated from the Church of England. Since the early 1100s, the Welsh bishops had made a promise of obedience to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Walker, 1976, p. 31). The Welsh Church Act made an explicit ruling that following disestablishment, "the bishops and clergy of the Welsh church were forbidden to attend the Canterbury Convocation" (P. Jones, 2000, p. 21). From then on, the archbishop and bishops of the new and separate Province of the Church in Wales could no longer look to Canterbury for authorisation (D. D. Morgan, 2011, p. 80; Walker, 1976, pp. 169–170).

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controversy as to the the validity of Anglican Orders" (p. 301). His search for authorisation and especially divine authorisation for ordained ministry should be read in this light.

It was one of the principal architects of the new Constitution who resolved the issue of authority. Charles Green[40], a High Church Anglo-Catholic in the tradition of Moberly, was highly influential in the creation of the Constitution. Writing in his commentary on this legal framework he claims that the Governing Body did not have its authority "conferred upon it by the subordinate Clergy and by the Lay members of the Church" (Green, 1937, pp. 192–193). On the contrary, using the same argument as Moberly, authority is conferred from above:

> The plenitude of ecclesiastical authority and power was vested by Jesus the Messiah in His Twelve Apostles, and through them in their successors the Bishops. The problem whether the Clergy and Laity could or should confer authority or power upon the Bishops can never arise, because the Bishops through their Consecration already possess the same in full measure (Green, 1937, pp. 192–193).

Whatever the lesser clergy and laity bring to the table is not theirs to bring by right, but as a concession on the part of the bishops who appreciate the "idea of Brotherhood" and consultation (p. 14). Nevertheless, "[t]he totality of the Christian Ministry stands in the Bishop alone: he sums up all subordinate ministries in his own" (p. 13). It is also notable how frequently the word power, used in association with the office of a bishop, is mentioned in Green's commentary.

D. D. Morgan (2011), in his history of Christianity in twentieth-century Wales, notes "the monarchical authoritarianism" that comes across in Green's writing. His contemporaries, though, while noting that "[h]e could be outspoken and stern" also paid tribute to his pastoral care and "interest in individuals" ("The Bishop of Bangor: A Personal Memory," 1944). In 1944, Green's anonymous obituary writer in The Times pondered whether "some of the precedents set during his tenure of office may long continue to influence church life in Wales" ("Obituary Dr. C.A.H. Green

[40] Archdeacon of Monmouth 1914-1921; Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Monmouth 1921-1928); Bishop of Bangor 1928-44; Archbishop of Wales 1934-1944

Former Archbishop of Wales," 1944). Similarly, Owain Jones[41], writing in his volume on the life of Glyn Simon[42], reflected on Green's legacy:

> The influence of Dr. Green's book, which was compulsory reading for a whole generation of Welsh clergymen, has been, to say the least, unfortunate. His doctrine of episcopacy is that of a late nineteenth century Anglo-Catholic. Authoritarian in the extreme, it is based on a mechanical view of the Apostolic Succession—rather reminiscent of charging a new battery from the electric mains—which has long been outmoded (O. W. Jones, 1981, p. 131).

It is a moot point whether the deference to the authority of bishops identified by Harries et al. (2012, p. 4) and affirmed by one diocesan conference as a systemic problem (Diocese of St Asaph, 2013, p. 6) is a direct result of attitudes and systems 'baked' into the Constitution at the time of disestablishment. Also, it is interesting to note, that still today, various official statements and documents pull in different directions regarding authority. Thus, the Church in Wales' website states that: "The Governing Body is responsible for decisions that affect the Church's Faith, Order and Worship. [It is] the supreme legislature of the Church in Wales" (Church in Wales, c). On the other hand, the Constitution declares:

> Subject to the Constitution, no proceeding of the Governing Body shall interfere with the exercise by the Archbishop of the powers and functions inherent in the Office of Metropolitan, nor with the exercise by the Diocesan Bishops of the powers and functions inherent in the Episcopal Office. (Church in Wales, 2016b, pt. VIII, 37)[43]

P. Jones (2000), in his discussion of the issue, notes that "the ambiguity about the nature of the episcopal office permits considerable freedom to determine the precise balance of power between the bishops, lesser clergy and laity" (p. 78)[44]. We

[41] Archdeacon of Brecon 1978-1987; Archdeacon of Gower 1987-1990
[42] Bishop of Swansea and Brecon 1953-1957; Bishop of Llandaff 1957-1971; Archbishop of Wales 1968-1971
[43] See also Doe (2002, pp. 129–127) for an exposition of church law.
[44] See also the full discussion pp.77-82.

cannot, perhaps, avoid the ambiguity but clear sight of its presence might allow for a greater degree of transparency in the exercise of power.

4.2.2.5 Summary – Structure

In mapping a selection of the field structures of the Church in Wales, I have sought to show how competition is rife within the field and how the voices of the laity and the clergy are ascribed different value. The symbolic capital of ordination and the theological education that goes with it are significant here. In addition, I consider that the outworking of the early history of the Church in Wales regarding its Constitution and understanding of ministry can be seen today in its hierarchical instincts and culture of deference.

4.2.3 The relation of the field to other fields

In this step, it is necessary to examine the field under consideration with regard to other, nearby fields and ultimately to the broader fields in which it sits. This latter instance Bourdieu refers to as the "field of power" as in political or legal power and government, though it can also include heads of industry, commerce, media, and so on (Bourdieu, 1996, pp. 264–272).

I will consider the field position of the Church in Wales using three related dimensions: marginalisation, consumerism, and managerialism. Marginalisation concerns the influence of the Church in terms of the size of its membership relative to the population. Consumerism involves consideration of how a significant modern phenomenon shapes the patterns of thought and behaviour of Welsh society as a whole, including the Church. Managerialism relates to how methods of organising from the commercial and business world are often utilised without critique by the Church. I take these three as representative of influences on the status of the Church, society in general, and the ordering of organisations.

4.2.3.1 Marginalisation

In chapter one, I described the nature of the Church in Wales and something of its change of status within Welsh culture since the beginning of the last century. In particular, the decline in membership of the religious field in Wales, of which the Church in Wales is a sub-field, has been considerable. It can, perhaps, be

summarised with reference to the publication of the Open University book *Understanding Contemporary Wales* (Mackay, 2010). The index contains only five references to religion, all quite minor, all referring to the past, and all confined within more extensive treatment of topics such as gender, class, and community[45]. It is hard to imagine an equivalent academic publication from one hundred years ago treating religion in the same fashion – as irrelevant to the Wales of its day.

Numerically, the decline in Welsh church and chapel attendance during the twentieth century is well-documented (e.g. D. D. Morgan, 2011, p. 265). Chambers (2005) too, discusses the impact of this decline and argues that denominations with a "centrally funded ministry", like the Church in Wales, were able to moderate the drop in attendance:

> Certainly, the experience of the Anglican churches in the city where every parish has an incumbent minister suggests that the role of the parish priest in halting or reversing decline is of crucial importance (p 207).

Nevertheless, the decline in average Sunday attendance in the Church in Wales since 1990 has been dramatic: from 62895 (Harris & Startup, 1999, p. 16) to 38,389 in 2007 (Church in Wales, 2009, p. 1) and 27,359 in 2017 (Church in Wales, 2018a, p. 3)[46]. So, too, the decline in stipendiary clergy numbers from 700 in 1998 (Church in Wales, 2014, p. 3) to 423 at the end of 2017 (Church in Wales, 2018b, p. 4) has meant that even in the cities the one church to one incumbent of Chambers' 2005 statement above no longer holds true[47]. Much as the move to Ministry Areas is promoted as a response to missional needs, it is hard to not to see it as driven primarily by decline[48]. Arguably, within the broader field of power and in relation to

[45] The two references to "Church" in the index refer to Charlotte Church, the singer and Welsh celebrity.
[46] For comparison, membership of Plaid Cymru in 2018 was around 8,000 (Audickas, Dempsey, & Keen, 2018, p. 11).
[47] The figures for non-stipendiary clergy (NSM) were just below 100 in 1998, rising to around 120 in the early 2000s and since 2015 have increased to 149 at the end of 2017.
[48] For example, the position paper on "Ministry in the Church in Wales" by the Bench of Bishops states that "the ministry area transcends the older parish unit [it is] a vision of something new, and not just an agglomeration of parish groups. … A ministry area is a calling to all the people of God in a particular area to collaborate in their mission and witness, in which each brings their gifts for the

social and cultural fields, the churches and chapels today find themselves at the margins of Welsh society.

4.2.3.2 Consumer choice

Another dimension on which we might plot the position of the field of the Church in relation to contemporary culture is that of consumerism. Clavier (2013) argues that consumerism functions as "the single most powerful and pervasive religion the world has ever known" (p. 1). As a religion, it shapes the lives of individuals and communities through its rituals, philosophy, and way of life.

> To live in a consumer society is to see the world as a consumer, think of oneself and others as consumers, and to seek happiness and fulfilment as a consumer. There is hardly anyone in the Western world who does not subscribe to consumerism. (Clavier, 2013, p. 2)

Clavier maintains that this phenomenon is one of three broad movements that have spread from the USA to the rest of the world along with the classic Christian missions concerned with evangelism and the "American ideals of individualism, democracy and the free market" (p. 1). He goes on to assert that the Church has become incorporated within the culture, values, and outlook of consumerism:

> Once Christianity allows itself to appear only as a lifestyle choice within the larger culture of consumerism, it surrenders its reason for existence and becomes merely a matter of consumer taste (Clavier, 2013, p. 5).

Percy (2012) makes a similar argument that people "shop for the religious experiences, identities and institutions that correlate to their needs and desires" (p. 20). Thus, faith and participation in worship become one choice amongst a plethora of leisure activities. In this way, we can see that for most of us, the field of the Church sits within the field of a free-market, consumer economy. As such, it is exposed to potentially alien values, and we fail to detect that values such as "self-

service of the whole" (Church in Wales, 2014, p. 8, Annex 1, num. 6). Compare the language in this Annex to that in the body of the report on ministry: "Ministry areas [are] a radical move to offer a strategic approach to the problems of declining numbers, financial difficulties and old forms of ministry which were not meeting the challenges of a missional church … The necessity of Ministry Area Teams is borne out in the annual ministry statistics [that] demonstrate the decline in Stipendiary Clerics and the gradual rise in non-Stipendiary (NSM) clerics" (p. 2-3, sec. 2, para. 1, 5).

actualization, individual success, consumption and personal freedom" are concepts that should be the subject of Christian evaluation (Pohl, 2012, Chapter 1, para. 14).

4.2.3.3 Managerialism

With the progress of consumerism in western culture, there arises the almost unconscious adoption of the language, symbols, and methods of the consumer economy. Barely a second thought is given to the notion that such things as targeted growth, marketing, organisational rationalisation, and strategic planning[49], are the 'natural' way of organising the Church. Thus, the Church's attention and priorities are increasingly manifested in a turn to managerialism with the attendant hope that this, at last, will be the key that will unlock the door to revival as the Church's 'message' is delivered with greater punch and clarity.

Clavier (2013), pursuing his notion of consumerism as a religion, refers to "managers, experts and celebrities" as "consumerism's priesthood" who minister the rites and sacraments of the system (pp. 49-55). Likewise, Pattison (2007) perceives that the practice of management "has many of the characteristics and functions traditionally performed by religion" (p. 68). As such, he maintains that its methods are ideologically driven and are not value-free or neutral. Thus, while managerial methods might be useful, "they need to be critically adopted and adapted so that churches retain that which is good and desirable in their lives and practices" (p. 69).

Pattison (1997) also observes the "blatant contradictions" that are inherent in the rhetoric of management, so that while " the actual techniques and methods used are those of hard, pragmatic, rationalistic measurement, control, economy, efficiency and effectiveness", the language used is couched in "a visionary rhetoric of excellence and aspiration" (p. 23). He proceeds to highlight an abundance of additional inconsistencies that are embedded in the illusion of control and moral

[49] An internet search on the phrase "Mission Action Plan" turns up many examples of English dioceses using this process. See, for example, https://www.london.anglican.org/kb/mission-action-planning/. Within the last ten years the Diocese of Llandaff utilised this approach.

neutrality (e.g. MacIntyre, 2007, Chapter 6, para. 32) proffered by management literature. Thus:

> … while much rhetoric dwells upon the importance of users and consumers, those who assess the effect of the introduction of managerialism tend to agree that the position and needs of users have not so far been significantly enhanced. Similarly, it is quite obviously difficult, even impossible, to offer more, better and increasingly flexible services if the real agenda is to save money as a matter of absolute priority. Again, stronger central control conflicts with attempts to make services more locally relevant and accountable (Pattison, 1997, p. 23).

Percy (2012), too, sounds the alarm about the potential for the church to lose its very identity in the process of adopting managerial methods and techniques uncritically:

> The church is not a body that is supposed to be ever-more productive, like a factory or industry that simply improves its output year on year. It is an organic body of wisdom, in which pruning, seasons, life and death course through its very veins. It is about renewal and resurrection – so also about letting go, and death. It is about love and loss, and the hope of things to come[50] (p. 20).

It is this turn to the managerial option that so many of my participants have perceived in the move to introduce ministry areas. In previous chapters, I have highlighted their anguish that the Church is losing its soul in the process of restructuring, a lament that echoes the warning articulated by Percy.

4.2.3.4 Summary – the relationship of fields

Marginalisation following numerical decline, the emergence of the individual as a customer and consumer, and the rise of managerialism with its attempts to measure and control tell of a shift in the position of the Church relative to society's fields of power. Arguably, the Church has only ever been at the centre of the field of power when it has been co-opted to other agendas. Nevertheless, the scale of

[50] At the end of Chapter 5 I will discuss Rowan Williams' description of the church as primarily a place of being and growth in wisdom and maturity.

decline by now has made marginalisation visible and conscious to all with attendant anxiety[51]. The question is: should the Church respond to the marginalisation with the tools of the broader social field? In that field, competition for product placement and the levers of managerial control are everything – perhaps amplifying the anxiety. Alternatively, is it to be the acceptance of "a transition to a remnant community with a hope commensurate with modest political ambitions and deep commitments to the … holiness traditions" (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 129)?

4.3 Discussion of the field analysis

Bourdieu's three-level field analysis helps to locate the habitus of individuals within both the field of the Church and the broader context of the surrounding culture. It also helps to identify what symbolic capital is at the site of competition. That, in turn, allows it to be held up for scrutiny and decision about whether it is 'worth the candle'.

In the discussion above, I have argued that the Church in Wales has, in the last century, moved to a peripheral place within Welsh society and public consciousness. The impact of this is often felt keenly by clergy who, amid personal anxiety about a weaker Church, "are expected to keep smiling through" (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 121) with all of the potential mental health consequences (p. 122). However, it is not the clergy alone who have this experience – the laity, too, are often worried about the future of the Church. Despite this widespread anxiety, I want to argue along with Greenwood (2002, p. 146) that, while this may be viewed negatively, it also places the Church in a liminal[52] space (Roxburgh, 2010, p. 52).

In Bourdieu's terms, the field of the Church is unstable – the old rules and regularities of the game are fading, and the new patterns and structures are not yet fully realised. It is this instability that is the source of the field-habitus mismatch experienced by my participants. However, it is also the source of possibilities,

[51] In September 2016 Governing Body refused to pass unamended the procedural "take note" of the Membership and Finance Report. Instead, after an anxious debate on the "'substantial decline' over past year", they took note "with a heavy heart" (Highlights of the Church in Wales Governing Body September 2016, 2016, p. 10).

[52] "1. relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process. 2. Occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold" (Lexico dictionary)

creativity and openness, alongside the suffering and struggles to reconfigure the field. Thus, there is an unpredictability about liminal space that "is required by the narrative structure of human life" and its purpose (MacIntyre, 2007, Chapter 15, para. 33). In the face of this unpredictability, Moltmann (1967) asserts the fundamental stance of the Christian community and its potential to live courageously in the hope of God's promised future:

> Human life must be risked if it would be won. It must expend itself if it would gain firmness and future. If; however, we are thus to risk expending ourselves, then we need a horizon of expectation which makes the expending meaningful … The expectation of the promised future of the kingdom of God which is coming to man and the world to set them right and create life, makes us ready to expend ourselves unrestrainedly and unreservedly in love and in the work of the reconciliation of the world with God and his future. The social institutions, roles and functions are means on the way to this self-expending (p. 337).

Thus, the promissory nature of ordination[53] discussed above finds its source and validation in the faithful character of God. The liminal space in which the Church in Wales finds itself should be alive with the possibilities of God's creative action in the world.

The problem is that in this liminal space, Church leaders all too frequently reach for the wrong solutions. I am arguing that the consumer and managerial assumptions of measurement, strategic planning, and control import a worldview of scientific management that is at odds with the sort of Christian hope described by Moltmann. Ling (2012) also expresses the same concern about the continuing ministerial development of ministers:

> You cannot ignore the sound of epistemic cultures clashing as you place measurement, audit and accountability alongside professional

[53] Itself founded on the promissory nature of baptism.

> autonomy, community and folly for Christ's sake (1 Cor. 3.18) (Chapter 13, para. 4).

I also argue that with the history of the Church in Wales' understanding of Apostolic authority from Moberly and Green, the reach for the levers of management has as much to do with defending power as it does with theological definitions concerning episcopacy.

I believe that my participants witness to the reality that a turn to managerialism in Church leadership does not produce the desired fruit of collaborative work and relationship. In fact, in an environment where matters of the heart and spirituality are foremost, it is in danger of producing, at best, a mechanical compliance.

Knowledge of this culture clash is not new. For example, in the preface to *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land (1973),* William Stringfellow sought to "understand America biblically" in contrast to what he perceived was happening in much of public life, namely, "interpreting the Bible Americanly" (Stringfellow & Kellermann, 1994, p. 175). For Stringfellow, the syncretism of the churches resulted in a "false piety and idolatrous religion" (Kelly, 1999, p. 246) that interpreted the Bible to justify American purposes and failed to attend to the significant issues of his time such as the civil rights movement and the war in Vietnam. Stringfellow comprehended that America's consumption of material goods and its growing trust in technology and military strength were bringing about an escalating blasphemy "as America's crisis as a nation distends" (Stringfellow & Kellermann, 1994, p. 175).

Stringfellow, like Bourdieu, seeks to unmask our hidden assumptions and help us to "beware of words" (Wacquant, 1989). Reflexivity of this sort requires going 'behind' the language of ordinary and everyday life – unpicking the taken-for-granted categories of thought and speech that appear neutral but in fact, carry hidden beliefs and practices:

> If it is indeed true that the real is relational, then it is quite possible that I know nothing of an institution about which I think I know everything, since it is nothing outside of its relations to the whole (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 232).

4.4 Where next?

Having used Bourdieu's "thinking tools" to examine the field of the Church in Wales, I will turn to a fuller examination of the habitus of power. In doing so, I am seeking to make conscious the mechanisms of the field structures that, when hidden, can have disastrous consequences and destroy any hopes of collaborative working.

5 The Conundrum of power

5.1 Introduction

> Every group has its more or less institutionalized forms of delegation which enable it to concentrate the totality of the social capital, which is the basis of the existence of the group … in the hands of a single agent or a small group of agents and to mandate this plenipotentiary, … to represent the group, to speak and act in its name and so, with the aid of this collectively owned capital, to exercise a power incommensurate with the agent's personal contribution. (Bourdieu, 2008, p. 23)

This chapter examines the way power is exercised within both the formal and informal structures of the field of the Church in Wales. The above quotation from Bourdieu draws attention to how individuals come to represent the whole institution and get to use a level of power above their personal symbolic capital. For collaborative ministry, the style in which those individuals use power is crucial in promoting or suppressing the relationality at its heart. Wielding power in an oppressive, dictatorial fashion will quash the collaborative instincts of groups or teams – a subject I will cover in more depth in chapter six.

For this analysis, I will keep in mind Ricoeur's double hermeneutic, referred to in chapter two (sec. 2.5.3.2): "willingness to suspect, willingness to listen; vow of rigor, vow of obedience" (Ricoeur, 1970, p. 27). This approach will allow me to recognise my personal position as a committed member of my Church *and* to critique it as a fallible and at times, oppressive institution. The purpose of the examination is to reflect theologically and sociologically on power in institutions and how the manner of its use reproduces throughout the field – affecting for good or ill the relationality that is the foundation of collaborative ministry.

5.2 Learning about power

As Dean of Ministry Development at St Michael's College, Cardiff between 2006 and 2015, I was required to provide training for newly ordained clergy (curates) and their experienced priest-mentors (training incumbents). Among the essential qualities looked for in the training incumbent is that he or she is a person who "has

demonstrated a collaborative approach in discussion, planning and action in the parish" (Archbishops Council, 2005, p. 115). They are expected to supervise and guide the curate in their formation, including helping the curate to "demonstrate ability to use understanding of group dynamics to participate in and lead groups and to reflect with insight on the use and abuse of power" (p. 70).

Consequently, the relationship between the curate and training incumbent is essential as a foundation for the curate's future ability to exercise collaborative ministry. It also functions as a very visible model for collaborative relationships within the parish where they serve their curacy. How that relationship is conducted 'speaks' loudly into the wider relationships in a parish.

Ross-McNairn & Barron (2014) devote a section of their book, *Being a Curate,* to the relational difficulties encountered by curates in their training (pp. 125-133) and state that this is a far from uncommon phenomenon: "it is a poorly concealed secret that a lot of training incumbents do not sufficiently value their curates" (p. 125). Even if there is a good relationship, it can be challenging to be a junior colleague if, in a previous life, you have held a senior position. Equally, it can be challenging for a training incumbent not to feel insecure or threatened when a curate is gifted or popular in ways the trainer is not.

My personal experience of running training courses for curates and training incumbents confirms that the curate-training incumbent relationships can, all too often, be quite painful. Within that working relationship, misuse of the inherent imbalance in power between the curate and training incumbent is often identified as a critical determining factor regarding its success or failure (Lamdin & Tilley, 2007, pp. 96, 103).

At one of the first training courses I facilitated for training-incumbents and their newly ordained curates, I wanted to explore how they would first of all acknowledge and subsequently manage the power differential between them. After introducing the subject, I asked the direct question: "Are you a powerful person?" I was taken aback by the participants' obvious discomfort and their attempts to qualify any language about them holding personal power: "I don't like to think of

myself as powerful – I think of my ministry in terms of servanthood", was a typical reply. Their attempts to soften or avoid the language was, for a significant number, accompanied by physical squirming as they wrestled with ideas that made them feel uncomfortable. In subsequent training events, throughout my ten years at St Michael's, that response to my question was repeated with students in training (ordinands), curates, and experienced clergy. One participant, a skilful and experienced priest himself, was so struck by the reaction to my question as to include it in his own reflections on the nature of power in Christian practice (Hughes, 2017, Chapter 7, The uncomfortable power and glory)

Conversely, the response to my follow-up question, "Do you think that Jesus was a powerful person?" was invariably positive. This tension between consideration of Jesus as powerful and our own diffidence in acknowledging personal power, created the space for fruitful discussion and the opportunity to explore questions such as: What language does the Church use in its ordination rites to speak of authority? How are obedience, power, and the Holy Spirit characterised in Christian usage? In what way is Jesus portrayed as powerful in the gospels? Why do we feel reluctant to speak of ourselves as powerful?

Nonetheless, despite many useful discussions, I have been left with the clear impression that, within the Church in Wales, many clergy (and potentially others) who hold positions of authority are uncomfortable with the notion of owning and reflecting on personal or positional power.

5.3 Power exercised

A further spur to critical reflection on the embodiment of power in ministry comes from the related fields of safeguarding (of both children and vulnerable adults) (Chevous, 2004, pp. 16, 51, 66–67, 113–114) and bullying and harassment (ACAS, 2014, pp. 1–2). The shocking conclusion from many experts and researchers is that an unwillingness or inability to reflect upon our own power leads, inexorably, to its misuse[54]. Furthermore, recent research has demonstrated that forms of spiritual

[54] The Archbishop of York spoke recently before the hearing "in the Anglican investigation being conducted by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)". The Church Times report

abuse are not confined to the extreme margins of the Church nor equated simplistically with positional power (Oakley, 2009, pp. 221–225). At best, this points to a deep-seated lack of fluency concerning the exercise of power and, at worst, to the misuse of power to manipulate and control others for personal advantage or satisfaction.

Consequently, questions about power in ministry are of concern to the contemporary Church on several counts. First, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, it massively affects the relational environment and the subsequent possibility of collaborative work. Second, the Church is duty-bound to ensure that it is a safe place for the vulnerable. Joanna Collicutt (2015, pp. 207–208, 217–218), for instance, draws attention to the New Testament narratives concerning leaders who abuse power and to the need for the acknowledgement of and reflection on personal power as it is embodied in ministry. That those who hold office and exercise power have a duty of care to those who are vulnerable or weak is axiomatic in the bulk of the New Testament, in the ordination rites (Church in Wales, 1984, pp. 722–723), and the Church's professional ministerial guidelines (Church in Wales, 2010, sec. 2). The third reason for the Church's attention is that, in its organisation and practices, it puts flesh on its values – the values it truly believes in, not merely the ones it talks about. As Jürgen Moltmann insists:

> The church is the fellowship of those who owe their new life and hope to the activity of the risen Christ. The use of its new freedom in this world ought to correspond to the rule of Christ and to reflect this physically and politically (Jurgen Moltmann, 1993, Chapter III.4.(iv)).

5.4 Definitions of power

At one level definitions of power reflect neutral meanings to do with effecting change: "a capacity or ability: to do something or act in a particular way; to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events" (Definition of power in English). From this perspective, power is simply the ability to make things happen.

stated that "Bishops must be aware that 'if they have absolute power, it will corrupt them,' and that 'unquestionable authority' is no longer acceptable in the Church, especially when making safeguarding decisions" (H. Williams, 2019)

At another level definitions are related to the assumed or delegated authority given to or taken by an individual, body, or authority such as a government or state (Definition of power in English). Here we move into notions of regulation, control, and the complexities of human interactions.

Magee & Galinsky (2008), writing within the field of social psychology and decision-making process, define social power as "asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations" (p 361). They further note that the parties involved in social power relations are interdependent: both share a perspective that the resources in question are valuable or consequential. However, that value or consequence is subjective and not necessarily determined by the higher status party. An example of this type of relationship persists within Welsh and English Anglican systems of governance where parish share is a contribution to central diocesan funds; it is both a means of supporting full-time parish clergy across the diocese and of stronger parishes assisting the weaker. However, the share is sometimes withheld by some churches because they disagree with the theological stance of the diocese (e.g. Fraser, 2006). Though the Bishop and diocesan officials may hold higher status, in these circumstances, parishes with more substantial financial resources can exercise the greater power. Thus, as Magee & Galinsky (2008) observe:

> … power [is] more objective than status. Once one understands the sources of value for each party—the resources that are experienced as benefits and burdens—one can measure each party's power. (p. 361)

Rollo May (1972), in a study of the roots of violence, asserts that a common misconception is to understand power and love as opposites:

> [T]he more power one shows, the less love; the more love, the less power. Love is seen as powerless and power as loveless. The more one develops his [sic] capacity for love, the less he is concerned about manipulation and other aspects of power. Power leads to domination and violence; love leads to equality and human well-being. (p. 113)

Such reasoning, he maintains, is the result of casual thinking and causes "endless trouble". May's observation resonates with my own experience with Church in

Wales clergy and ordinands. What seems to have been foremost for them is a view of power as power 'over' or power 'against'. That was undoubtedly the point of view expressed in the training sessions I facilitated. They appear to be assuming that to hold overt power is to strive for domination. May takes the standpoint that such thinking stems from "seeing love purely as an emotion and power solely as a force of compulsion" (pp. 113-114). For May, this denial of power stems from an unexamined desire for innocence – a "pseudo-innocence". Both love and power, he maintains, need to be owned as a state of being and respected as fundamental processes of life (p. 114).

Litchfield (2006), in her volume on pastoral care, appropriates May's thinking, particularly his typology of power, to reflect on the exercise of power in ministry. This typology is a spectrum, beginning at one extreme with Exploitative Power – a form that "dominates, using force and coercion, such as threats or destructive criticism". Next in line is Manipulative Power that "controls in more subtle or disguised ways, for example by exclusion from significant communication". In the centre of the spectrum is Competitive Power, a style that "is deeply ingrained in our culture …It can be positive and energising when parties are relatively equal, for example in sport, but is destructive where there is an imbalance of power". Next, in the direction of the positive pole, is Nutritive Power that "sustains and empowers, enabling the less powerful person to develop their own competence and freedom to act". Finally, the ultimate expression of power come with Integrative Power that "respects the freedom of the other person and encourages their potential strengths; it involves relating to them as an equal, albeit with a different role …" (p. 39).

In a collaborative relationship, the desirable forms of power are at the latter end of the spectrum. As trainers, it was this sort of power that we were looking for in the curate-training incumbent relationship[55].

[55] In the handbook I was instrumental in developing for Training Incumbents and Curates, *Beginning Public Ministry*, we set out how the nutritive forms of power could be used in a section on "The Stages in the Process of Supervision". The four stages of supervision were: 1. Novice, where the supervisor provides a structured environment; 2. Apprentice, where supervision is less didactic but

May, himself, takes care to point out that these five forms of power exist as a spectrum and he maintains that they are "all present in the same person at different times … The goal for human development is to learn to use these different kinds of power in ways adequate to the given situation" (May, 1972, p. 112). While he resists collapsing integrative and nutritive power into love, he admits that "the lower forms of power … have a very minimum of love in them, while the higher forms … have more." (p. 118)

Litchfield adds to this a consideration of the authority given in ordination as "power that is both explicit and legitimate" (Litchfield, 2006, p. 38). She describes how clergy can be unwittingly powerful in the way that their "views and opinions … can have a powerful positive or negative influence on parishioners, even though the individual ordained minister might feel that their influence is negligible." Such attribution of power, she rightly observes, highlights the need for self-awareness and reflection together with "humility and imagination to remain in touch with the powerlessness and vulnerability which lay people, junior colleagues or those in training may experience" (p. 38).

May concludes by reflecting on the interplay between love and power and how each may serve and strengthen the other:

> … love needs power if it is to be more than sentimentality and … power needs love if it is not to slide into manipulation. Power without charity ends up in cruelty. (May, 1972, p. 250)

The essential form of love, he observes, is compassion, the opposite of violence, that arises from our sense of community which, in turn, "is based on our knowing and our understanding of each other" (p. 251).

May's typology of power and its appropriation by Litchfield are useful as reflective guides for individuals in ministry. Both provide a set of searching questions that can shape reflexivity and prayer regarding ministerial practice and the use of power by

---

with a good deal of emotional support; 3. Practitioner, where the relationship is more collegial; 4. Advanced Practitioner, where practical wisdom has been developed and there is a good internal supervisor (Church in Wales, 2016a).

those in authority. In this respect, they make a valuable contribution to the formation of a habitus of collaboration and collaborative leadership by, for example, training incumbents.

However, as I have argued previously from Bourdieu's work, practice is more than the development of an individual habitus. It is also the product of field conditions and the symbolic and cultural capital valued within the field. My own experience together with that of my research participants leads me to the conclusion that it is possible to exercise nutritive forms of power (that is, to have a healthy habitus of collaboration) and yet belong to an institution (a field) where the experience feels to be one of manipulation and control. In such a field, it is tempting to conform and replicate precisely the behaviours of manipulation and control (and, in effect, to work non-collaboratively). Hence the continuing question of the exercise of power in the field structures of the Church.

5.5 Participants' reflections on systems and power

Several of my interviewees reflected this ambivalence with power and hierarchy, often expressing frustration with the structures and systems of the Church. Simon reflected on the Church in Wales's attitude to collaborative ministry in terms of reluctance and defensiveness about giving freedom to parish clergy to experiment – particularly in the area of allowing lay people to take on roles that have formerly been the preserve of the ordained.

> ***Simon***
>
> The approach, I suppose,
> I always find or that I feel,
> the Church in Wales has to team work
> and collaborative ministry is —
>
> the best way to describe it would be tentative
> and at worst, suspicious.
> And
> with an absolute reluctance to let go
> to give too much.

An important consideration here is that Simon self-identifies as an Anglo-Catholic and has a high view of the sacraments and the ordained ministry; a standpoint that is often caricatured as having a "Father knows best" attitude (Harries et al., 2012, p. 4). Nevertheless, he speaks of how priests and bishops often see lay ministry as "being a bit of a threat … it's so much and no further." A little farther on in the interview, he follows up with an insight about the way Church order is over-regulated regarding lay people conducting funerals, offering pastoral care, or administering the sacraments:

> ***Simon***
>
> We're very rule-bound
> yes *[laughs]* yes
>
> We
> almost sort of
> legislate as regards the love and grace we
> seek to convey
> through pastoral care
>
> When we start seeing it legalistically
> then it kills
> it deadens.

Harris & Startup (1999) identified similar issues for Church in Wales clergy some sixteen years earlier (p. 106):

> The parochial clergy feel that they are the Church in the institutional sense, that 'the buck stops with them', and that they can reasonably look to their superiors for help and support. However, they find the emphasis in the relationship is on the upward flow of information, with clergy engaged in form-filling or providing answers in the context of visitations, while their superiors rarely substantively assist but instead engage in high-level meetings or generate slogans, such as 'mutual responsibility' or 'the decade of evangelism' (p. 106).

John, another participant, also observed this hierarchical "flow" and the obtuse[56] nature of the Church in furthering the very attitudes it seeks to avoid. For him, the culture takes the form of a "pecking order" that implies rigidity and constraint around those seeking to respond to a changing world.

> I think the church almost encourages you into
> a non-collaborative stance
> I'm not quite sure what happens within the culture
> that encourages that
> but we need to seriously look at our culture
> and look at how we organise the church
> and to seriously ask questions of it
>
> There's a rigid pecking order in the diocese
> and we all know that
> you know
> the bishop, the archdeacons, the dean
> you know
>
> But does anybody ever question
> that pecking order
> does anybody question
> the culture
>
> I think we need to seriously question
> what's happening in the church
> you know
>
> How is it
> helping us or hindering us,
> to work together on this?

As with the respondents to the surveys of Harris & Startup (1999, p. 106), John identifies the hierarchical practice of generating high-level activity that is received by those "below" as sloganising or branding of the official diocesan strategy.

[56] "Annoyingly insensitive or slow to understand" (Definition of obtuse in English).

What it feels like to me at the moment —
it's a complete branding exercise
and I'm not sure what's behind there.

I've got a negative thing about branding
it just turns me off completely
it's the 'emperor's new clothes'

I long for it to be a bit more real
and to be a bit more grounded and
[and for them to acknowledge]
that this is going to be a tough battle [to change]

It's not going to happen [just] like that
you know
we need to be honest about how tough it is
and we need to begin to allow people
to grow and to develop as God wills
to allow space for that,
not be threatened by it as so often we are.

Here John is referring to the significant changes happening as his diocese groups parishes into Ministry Areas. He complains that much of the planning arrives in a top-down manner from a central hierarchy. Resistance at a parish level is received as being off-message. His lament is that there is no space given for genuinely held misgivings about or critique of plans to change: all is fixed, and conformity or deviation, 'being on the bus or getting left behind'[57], are the only options. Thus, a lament for what is lost or left behind in the past is not able to be voiced, and compliance alone is required. In this vein, C. Lee & Horsman (2002) discuss the capacity of Church institutions to mould individuals in ways that are often damaging to their mental and spiritual health. The consequent dissonance of being committed to an organisation whose stated ideals are so far removed from the

[57] In personal conversation with other clergy across the Church in Wales, this phrase has come up several times concerning the introduction of Ministry Areas.

experienced reality compounds stress and provokes crises of identity (Section 1 Culture, e.g. p. 10).

The field-habitus mismatch, then, is between on the one hand, a central administration that looks for implementation of a diocesan vision in what is received as a mechanical top-down fashion, and on the other hand, an attempt to implement a collaborative habitus (which requires time and patience) at a more local level. The flow of power is one way and rigid. It seems, too, to commit a similar theological error to that of equating priesthood with the Church (see 4.2.2.3 above): that is, equating the 'centre' of the diocese with the Body of Christ distributed through the churches and congregations of the diocese. This leaves us with the question of hierarchy and whether it is inherently problematic for collaborative ministry in the way power is controlled?

5.6 Power and hierarchy

Greenwood (2013) has argued extensively that deference to and reliance on hierarchical structures within Anglicanism act as a formidable hindrance to the church in its attempt to live cooperatively as the body of Christ:

> Apparently genial – but in fact manipulative – hierarchical forms of power breed powerlessness and a culture of infantilizing and competitiveness. In all disciplines and professions, the resistance towards, and desire for, strong leadership continues to be a contentious issue. (Chapter 6: Church virtues and practices – para 9)

However, the situation is, perhaps, not quite as straightforward as Greenwood maintains. Galinsky & Schweitzer (2015), again from the field of social psychology, argue that competition and cooperation are not two poles of an either /or dichotomy but approaches that must be held as counterparts and whose use depends on the context:

> The ongoing tension between competition and cooperation emerges from three fundamental forces. First, resources are scarce. Second, humans are social beings. And third, our social world is inherently unstable and dynamic. (Introduction: Striking the right balance).

Hierarchy, they argue, facilitates our need to cooperate and accomplish essential tasks together; scarcity, however, tends to drive us to compete with one another; while responding to an unstable and dynamic world requires creativity and innovation that is best achieved by egalitarian processes that are often suppressed by hierarchical forms of organisation. In an earlier study, Magee & Galinsky (2008) noted how hierarchy tends to be self-perpetuating and resistant to change:

> … once a hierarchy gets established, a number of organizational and psychological processes conspire to create different degrees of opportunity to maintain and even acquire more power and status. We argue that these processes affect all members of a given hierarchy in ways that perpetuate the established order. … even those individuals and groups who stand the most to gain by disrupting hierarchy have some reason to forego any attempt to change the existing rank order (p. 365).

The critical task would seem to be the promotion of a hierarchy that is sufficiently self-aware in three aspects. First, to know when adherence to hierarchical mechanisms is beneficial to achieving common goals. Secondly, to recognise when the loosening of the hierarchy is essential to create the necessary egalitarianism that promotes creativity and innovation. And thirdly, to have the confidence to recognise when scarcity thinking (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013) is creating anxiety which narrows our imaginative bandwidth and drives us to compete unhelpfully with one another (Galinsky & Schweitzer, 2015, Chapter 3 When hierarchy hurts).

Galinsky, Magee, Rus, Rothman, & Todd (2014) take further account of the adverse effect of power on those in positions of authority – especially the tendency in those who hold power to drive action that is egocentric and self-focused. They demonstrate that, when power is combined with perspective-taking (the ability to listen to and see the viewpoint of others), there is a synergy that better navigates the social world and leads to greater communication and sharing of power. Using the metaphor of a car journey, particularly the combination of the accelerator and steering wheel, they reflect:

> Power without perspective-taking can be selfish and egocentric; thus, power needs a steering wheel to be socially useful. Perspective-taking without agency can be ineffective for decision making; thus, perspective-taking often needs a propellant to galvanize it (p. 627).

They further note how perspective-taking may mitigate the adverse effects of holding power:

> … pairing power with perspective-taking could temper some of the known harmful effects of power on compassion, generosity, objectification, and advice rejection. … Perspective-taking acted as a directional corrective for power holders, steering their agentic tendencies toward more socially productive ends. (p.633)

Their argument implies that perspective-taking is an essential facet of leadership if there is to be consensus, collaboration and agency operating collectively and relationally.

Galinsky et al. (2014) also report that the synergy achieved when power is combined with perspective-taking is further amplified when those in power are required to explain and justify their decisions to others outside the power relationship (p. 630) — the decisions made were not only more effective but better received:

> What we found is that those who were accountable produced the most candid yet interpersonally sensitive lay-off plans (Galinsky & Schweitzer, 2016, p. 36).

A hierarchical structure, then, is not of itself problematic. It can be a means of achieving common goals, of collaborating to reach agreed destinations. What matters a great deal is its responsiveness and adaptability to different contexts so that it does not become a rigid bureaucracy. The ability to receive feedback, to be transparent, and inclusive in its decision-making and work processes helps to keep a hierarchy healthy and perceived as an enabling structure. Of great consequence for the whole process is who has a 'voice' or symbolic capital within the hierarchy? The answer to that will depend on who is regarded as part of the system and who is

regarded as ‘other’. A consideration of the perspective of my female participants will lead into a discussion of being made ‘other’, of scapegoating, and how even institutions like the Church can act in a malign manner and ‘kill’ the relationality required for collaboration.

5.7 Female perspectives

For the three women in my group of participants, the impact of the system of organisation and its power is felt in varying forms of not fitting in. For Lucy, there is a pre-shaped mould that does not match her practice:

> It’s been a bit of a tricky relationship
> [with the Church]
> because I’ve never really fitted
> the mould
> of a Church in Wales cleric.
>
> And that’s not been the easiest
> but I’ve kind of learnt
> how to work around it
> and just get on with what God wants me to do.
>
> Get on with preaching
> and teaching
> and caring
> and
> not to worry too much
> about the wider structure.

For Ann, it takes the form of a growing realisation that liturgical practices that she once found attractive do not correspond to her vision of relationships in the Church:

> I suppose
> I’m at the Protestant end
> of the Catholic spectrum
> you know —
> as I got more involved

in church as a layperson,
I was very influenced
by lots of Anglo-Catholic clerics
but it wasn't the women thing
that turned me off that
It was the power
that goes with the dressing up
the I am different from you
and that disempowering of lay people
when you get that priestly clique
and as time went on
I grew less and less content with that.

"Giving the Church a good kicking" is the powerful metaphor that Karen employs to talk of rousing an unresponsive body and her sense of calling to be a prophetic voice warning of impending judgement.

'How does the church change?'
Does it change by people on the inside kicking it out
or does it change by people on the outside kicking it in?

When I was a teenager
and grappling with the whole question of ordination –
I just was convinced
that actually
although I had that sense of call
I was going to be far more use on the outside
kicking it
as a kind of a — prophetic voice.

It was only when
I heard Bishop *N.* speaking
when I was twenty
and I thought
'Wow! If he can survive in the church as a bishop —'

then maybe I should be on the inside,
kicking out

Maybe the church needs to let more people in
that are the niggly voices
that they normally see as troublemakers.

These three women's experience of not fitting into the mould is not exclusive to them. Several of the men expressed similar concerns. However, in contrast to the men, I sense that there is a significant component of the women's experience that is the result of their gender. Each of them was ordained at a time when women were entering ministry for the first time. The experience of being "first" and "other" in a male-dominated profession, has imparted a sense of exclusion that is embodied in a way that I, as a man, can perceive only dimly. Men might have had to deal with a troubling system, but they nevertheless fit the patriarchal mould in a way that the women do not.

James (2018), in her research and reflections on the *Church in Wales Review July 2012* (Harries et al., 2012, p. 4), notes the way that her women participants "were highly critical of the inequalities between men and women in the church or spoke approvingly of women being ordained" (p. 100). Pickard (2012b), similarly, observes the way that feminist critique has wrestled with the metaphor of the Church as the body of Christ and the way that women are obliged to participate in salvation by means of a male body. He draws on Natalie Watson's work and follows her argument that an authentic embodiment of the Church only takes place when the bodies of women as well as men are recognised and celebrated (pp. 35-36).

5.8 The "other."

This experience of being "other" is firmly established in many feminist assessments of social phenomena. Graham (2012, p. 195) and Allen (2016, pp. 9–10), for example, draw upon Simone de Beauvoir's influential analysis that woman "is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 26). Her famous phrase, "One is not born,

but rather becomes, woman" (p. 330), derives from her conviction that the "Other" is created through already existing social constructs that depict supposedly essential male and female characteristics.

Further, she maintains that this othering is not limited to male-female relations but extends to any group that appears to encroach on the territory of the "conservative bourgeoisie" (p. 33). Thus, she observes, the Jim Crow laws in the southern United States were upheld in 1896 by the Supreme Court via a "separate but equal" argument. In de Beauvoir's estimation, this insidious justification promoted and prolonged extreme forms of inequity and prejudice. Similarly, she continues, anti-Semites have justified characterising Jews not only as an inferior but as an enemy within. For de Beauvoir there is a common thread in all these instances of othering: "This convergence is in no way pure chance: whether it is race, caste, class, or sex reduced to an inferior condition, the justification process is the same." Namely, an appeal to disciplines such as science, theology, philosophy to prove that "they" are different, even inferior, and are thus a dangerous threat to what is normal, pure, or true (p. 32).

5.8.1 The genesis of the other

James Alison (2010) takes up René Girard's understanding of mimesis, violence and scapegoating to analyse the roots of these forms of othering. In his personal journey as a Catholic, a priest, and "a truthful gay man within a mendacious environment" he knows at first-hand what it means to be "the other" (pp. 54—58, 89). From within that experience, he relates his encounter with Girard's thought as "something inspiring life-changing attention" (p. 73).

For Girard, mimesis, or the human predilection to imitate others, is the foundation of social relationships and culture. We see it as children develop and imitate both significant adults and other children, and it is present in most, if not all, forms of adult social exchange. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus takes note of this sort of reciprocity to teach about the alternative values of the kingdom of God:

> He said also to the one who had invited him, 'When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives

> or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.' (Luke 14:12-14, NRSV)

As Alison affirms, such imitation or reciprocity is the foundation of our social identity and how we come to know ourselves:

> [T]he relatively stable 'I' is a symptom of the massively successful prior social interactions which bring it into being and sustain it … what we call the 'self' is in fact something received through the eyes of others. It is what we see reflected back at us in the eyes of another that calls us into being. … Our 'selves' are reflexive. (Alison, 2010, p. 60)

5.8.2 Scapegoating and the Passion

Mimesis can be entirely constructive in shaping us as social beings. However, mimetic desire becomes "imitative rivalry" when individuals or groups reach for the same desired object (Girard, 1996, p. 9). In this case, violence results "when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they all desire through physical or other means" (p. 9). Again, simple observation of toddlers desiring the same toy and resorting to force to get or retain it reveals patterns that are often carried into adult life (Marr, 1998, pp. 590–591).

According to Girard, unchecked mimetic rivalry leads to violence whereby the "model" and the "imitator," each craving the same object, frustrate one another by blocking the other. In turn, this leads to each desiring the object even more and to intensifying the force applied to achieve the goal. Such an ever-increasing spiral leads to the conclusion that "[v]iolence is supremely mimetic" (Girard, 1996, pp. 12–13). From here Girard advances his argument by distinguishing between two forms of mimesis: one which is divisive and the other unitive:

> Whereas mimetic appropriation is inevitably divisive, causing the contestants to fight over an object they cannot all appropriate together, mimetic antagonism is ultimately unitive, or rather reunitive since it provides the antagonists with an object they can really share, in the

> sense that they can all rush against that victim in order to destroy it or drive it away. (Girard, 1996, p. 13)

The move from divisive mimetic appropriation to unitive mimetic antagonism is achieved as "a group's all-against-all" rivalry is resolved into "an all-against-one" rage toward an individual who is deemed to be the root cause of the problem (Alison, 2018, p. i). Using this scapegoating mechanism, "group unity, togetherness and survival" (Alison, 2010, p. 80) are created, and peace and order are restored – at least for a time.

Here, for Alison, is where the Passion narratives take on illuminating and salvific magnitude. Rather than positing the wrathful, vengeful God of penal-substitutionary models of atonement, Girard's approach comprehends the Passion as unmasking "the scapegoat mechanism … as the source for human togetherness" together with the violence associated with it (Alison, 2010, pp. x, 43–44). Far from participating in the mimetic desire and violence of human exchange, Jesus, in the gospel accounts of his Passion, is revealed as the innocent, forgiving victim. He stands over-against the methods of "The Powers That Be"[58] (Wink, 1998 - Book title), revealing their true identity as systems of manipulation, domination, enslavement and death.

> What killed Jesus was not irreligion, but religion itself; not lawlessness, but precisely the Law; not anarchy, but the upholders of order. It was not the bestial but those considered best who crucified the one in whom divine Wisdom was visibly incarnate. And because he was not only innocent, but the very embodiment of true religion, true law, and true order, this victim exposed their sacrificial violence for what it was: not the defense of society, but an attack against God. (Wink, 1998, p. 83)

It is the exposure, the unmasking of the scapegoat mechanism that draws its death-dealing sting. Once it is seen for what it is, "a lynch sacrifice", it becomes possible to

[58] Romans 13.1 KJV

"never again have to be involved in sacrifices, sacrificial mechanisms and all the games of 'wrath' which every culture throws up" (Alison, 2010, p. 43).

The value of this argument is significant for the way the Church understands the atonement and consequently, in its light, for the way it orders its common life. Instead of being saved from rather individualised sins and sinfulness according to the substitutionary models, we are liberated from the collective madness resulting from our indulgence in mimetic violence.

> With Girard we may see that the violent putting to death of Jesus is the communal selection of a scapegoat, a surrogate victim, in a situation threatening to implode. (Sykes, 2006, p. 130)

5.8.3 The power of the cross, mimesis, and the Church in Wales

While the apostle Paul clearly does not make use of Girard's anthropological understanding of the cross, we can sympathetically appropriate the principles of Paul's reasoning about the cross as we consider the themes of mimesis and scapegoating. In the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians, Paul sets out the fundamental problems that he wants to address in that church: namely, that there are "divisions" and "quarrelling" centred on several teachers, including Paul and Christ. Fee (2014) argues that the disputes at Corinth were "in some way being carried on in the name of "wisdom"". In the Hellenistic world, this *sophia* carried the expectation of rhetorical gifts of oration – gifts that Paul openly acknowledges he does not possess (Chapter 2.II.A).

> Within this kind of context they were quarreling over their leaders as teachers of wisdom, boasting in one or the other, and judging them from this merely human perspective, from which perspective neither Paul nor his gospel comes off very well. The message of a crucified Messiah, preached by an apostle who lived in considerable weakness, is hardly designed to impress the "wise," as they now considered themselves. (Chapter 2.II.A, para. 9)

Paul does not try to arbitrate between the factions, nor does he try to validate his assertion of apostleship by using the arguments and methods of the differing

parties. Instead, he understands the divisions to be "merely a symptom … of their radical misunderstanding about the nature of the gospel … the church … and their teachers" (Chapter 2.II.A, para.9-10). What is the nature of that misunderstanding? Given that later in the epistle Paul will write of God-given diversity within the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12), his appeal that they "should be of the same mind" (1 Cor. 1.10), must mean more than to a bland or forced uniformity.

We see the answer in Paul's appeal to the foolishness of the cross and the wisdom and power of God in Christ crucified. That appeal does not reduce the wisdom of the cross to merely one form of wisdom in competition with others. Paul's case is that the wisdom of the cross is of a completely different order:

> … he says in effect, "So you think the gospel is a form of *sophia*? How foolish can you get? Look at the *message*; it is based on the story of a crucified Messiah. Who in the name of wisdom would have dreamed that up? Only God is so wise as to be so "foolish" (1:18–25); "Furthermore, look at its *recipients*. Yourselves! Who in the name of wisdom would have chosen you to be the new people of God?" (1:26–31); "Finally, remember my own *preaching*. Who in the name of wisdom would have come in such weakness? Yet look at its results" (2:1–5)[59]. (Fee, 2014, Chapter 2, II.A.2, para. 3)

We find further clarification of Paul's understanding of the wisdom or "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2.6-16) in his later epistle to Philippi (1 Cor. 2.1-11). There he asserts precisely the focus of their unity: namely, that having the mindset of Christ is the antithesis of "selfish ambition" or "posturing" (Fee, 1995, Chapter 1 II.B.3):

> No wonder Paul cannot abide triumphalism — in any of its forms. It goes against everything that God is and that God is about. (Fee, 1995, Chapter 2, III.C. para. 7)

For Paul, therefore, the cross acts as a paradigm for relationships in the church, for the way power is exercised, and how difference is negotiated. In this paradigm, the mechanisms of othering and mimetic violence have no place and leaders (the wise,

[59] Italics in the original

powerful and noble of 1 Cor. 26) who act in such a way are not exercising the servant leadership of the mind of Christ.

Thus, In casting light on the mechanisms of othering and mimetic violence, Girard's argument reveals the contours of division at Corinth – that competitive spirit, partisan rhetoric, and superiority lead, ultimately to crucifixion and death. These, for the redeemed community, are directly at odds with the radical love that Paul later lays before the Corinthians in chapter thirteen. For a community to behave in such a way leads to death, not resurrection – eschatologically, it cannot "guarantee our own future as the people of God"[60] (Fee, 2014, Chapter 2, III.F.1, penultimate para.).

In Pauline terms, to perceive the Body of Christ, the community that by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit continues the life of the risen Jesus in the world, means not repeating the patterns that put Jesus to death. The community is to be a sign that there are to be no more victims (of mimetic violence).

> The death of Christ, his self-sacrifice, is community-creating. … The claim that the world of the powers can be altered by the creation of such a community was a political claim (Sykes, 2006, p. 131).

For the Church in Wales, at a time of turmoil and debate about the future, it can seem natural to those who hold offices of hierarchical authority to reach for the levers of managerial control to effect necessary change. In the previous chapter, I argued that an uncritical adoption of those methods by the church imports a worldview that is at odds with a Christian understanding of the human person-in-relationship. Here, I have added Girard's illumination of the processes of othering and mimetic violence to contend that hierarchical, managerial change methods are prone to generating competitive ideologies (forms of *sophia*) that contend for dominance, and are wont to 'other' those who disagree or resist.

In an earlier section of this thesis on the subject of "collaborative working across the practices of faith"[61], I reasoned that "the process (or habitus) of discussion,

[60] 1 Cor. 15.20-28 e.g. "for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ." (15.22)
[61] Chapter 3, section 3.4.3

disagreement, and decision making becomes as important (if not more so) than the decisions themselves". Paul's insistence on living by the power and wisdom of the cross and Girard's demonstration of the scapegoating mechanism of worldly wisdom fit together to highlight the substantial consequences of conforming to the former or the latter. I believe that the wisdom and power of the cross are at the heart of relational processes of change and collaboration.

In the next section of this chapter, I will employ Wink's development of Girard's and Stringfellow's thought to argue that it is possible to remain within the institution of the Church in Wales and be both critical of it and hopeful for it.

5.9 Fallen human institutions

Wink, like Alison, appropriates Girard's thesis that mimetic violence is endemic in human societies to explain that social bodies, together with their rituals and conventions, are locked (via the scapegoat mechanism) into a "fundamental belief that violence must be used to overcome violence" (Wink, 1998, p. 91). Of course, such beliefs are not openly stated but wrapped up in justifications, conspiracies, manipulation of the truth, and the passive consent of those who profit; even, at times, the consent of those who are enslaved by the system (Alison, 2010, pp. 44–48; Wink, 1998, p. 39).

Here, Wink (1998, pp. 13–36) also engages explicitly with William Stringfellow's adoption of the biblical notion of "Principalities and Powers"[62] (Stringfellow & Kellermann, 1994, pp. 192–213): "What the Bible calls *principalities and powers* are called in contemporary language *ideologies, institutions,* and, *images*[63]"(p. 194). Writing in America in 1973 as the Watergate scandal was unfolding, Stringfellow considers whether some powers are benign and capable of "respecting and serving human life." His response is emphatic:

> I suggest this to be … a virtually incredible view. It is both too naive and too narrow, incorrigible, and a stance that is both theologically false and empirically unwarranted. It really asserts that the principalities are only

[62] Ephesians 6.12 KJV
[63] Italics in the original

> somewhat or sometimes fallen and the Fall is not an essential condition of disorientation, morally equivalent to the estate of death, affecting the whole of creation in time. It construes the Fall as a wayward proclivity … It is, moreover, a remarkable expression of human vanity, insisting that human dominion over the rest of creation, if occasionally ineffectual, is nonetheless retained if humans have the stamina to exercise it. Empirically, meanwhile, this position dismisses the enormity and interminability of human suffering of all sorts prevalent in this world, which is only properly attributable to the fallenness of the principalities and powers. War or famine or pestilence; persecution or repression or slavery — the realities that constitute the daily fortune of the overwhelming masses of human beings on the face of the earth … issue from the parasitical posture of the principalities toward human life. Corporations and nations and other demonic powers restrict, control, and consume human life in order to sustain and extend and prosper their own survival. (Stringfellow & Kellermann, 1994, p. 210)[64]

As Wink observes, there is no *via media* here, no continuum from bad principalities to good ones, no optimism that human will or ingenuity can correct a corrupt body politic; original sin is all-embracing. Equally, Stringfellow is no pessimist and does affirm that "Christ's resurrection is for human beings and for the whole creation, including the principalities of this world" (Stringfellow & Kellermann, 1994, p. 203). In this fashion, Stringfellow spells out the tension between judgement and grace: "There is no political situation that cannot be redeemed, even though it is a redemption that takes place within a fallen order and therefore will inevitably manifest that fallenness itself" (Wink, 1995, p. 209). Likewise, Wink (1998), in his development of the paradox in Stringfellow's thought, asserts that three statements must be held to be accurate at one and the same time:

> The Powers are good.
>
> The Powers are fallen.
>
> The Powers must be redeemed (p. 31).

[64] Originally in *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, 1973, p. 77—84, 89—90, 92—94

The first recognises that forms of organisation and economics can make possible and enhance human flourishing; at their best, they have a God-given, created-for-good quality about them. The second statement recognises that all the Powers are, to a greater or lesser degree, corrupt and self-serving and thus fallen. The third affirms the final triumph of God in Christ and creates hope for people to live faithfully within the narrative arc of that redemption as it progresses to its fulfilment. Wink emphasises the importance of holding all three simultaneously and living within the necessary tension: "Conservatives stress the first, revolutionaries the second, reformers the third. The Christian is expected to hold together all three" (Wink, 1998, p. 32).

For the disciple in the Church in Wales, seeking to be faithful to God and the Church, and striving to live and relate collaboratively, there must also be the same recognition of the institution of the Church as a 'Power'. It is good, fallen, and in need of redemption at the same time, and thus, I must resolve to live and act generously within that tension.

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have posed power as a conundrum. On the one hand, it is simply the ability to get things done. On the other, clergy and lay people with models of service and pastoral concern uppermost in their minds can feel deeply ambivalent about it. My participants' experience has often been of feeling that the Church exercises power in an inflexible manner – seeking to restrain and restrict experiment and at worst to 'other' those whose 'voice' is different.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, those with the greatest symbolic and cultural capital reproduce the same structures and value the same forms of capital down the generations. Thus, the habitus remains the same – on the whole deferential and non-collaborative. From the perspective of Girard, Stringfellow and Wink, the Church acts as a Power, at times a place of relationality and collaborative activity for the sake of the Kingdom; at other times selfishly seeking its own preservation and focussed on its internal competition and divisions.

In the next chapter, I take Wink's notion of holding together the institutions' goodness, fallenness, and need of redemption into a discussion of ecclesial sociality and how to promote collaborative work.

6 Creating a Generative Team Environment

6.1 Introduction

> What life have you if not life together?
> There is no life that is not in community,
> And no community not lived in praise of GOD.
>
> (Eliot, 1963, p. 168, Choruses from "The Rock")

This section takes forward the discussion of previous chapters to locate the relationality at the heart of collaborative ministry within the practices of groups and teams of people. The call to relationality has a bearing on the way we inhabit our ecclesial hierarchy — not naively seeking to dispense with hierarchy but remembering what it is for and how it can be corrupted. In the remembrance of the purpose of our structures, we are seeking to infuse them with a spirit of generativity. Or better still, allowing them to be filled with "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit"; formulaic words that are frequently used to conclude church meetings and discussions and, perhaps, would serve better at the start than at the end. A Trinitarian approach to practice invites us into a wide sociality that goes beyond persons-in-relation to include the whole of creation (Pickard, 2012b, p. 95).

6.1.1 What do I mean by a group or a team?

In the Church in Wales, a bishop licences parish clergy to new appointments, using the words, "Receive the cure of souls which is both yours and mine". These words reflect the theological concept of the bishop as the chief shepherd and pastor of the diocese and the new incumbent as working on behalf of and relating to the bishop (Church in Wales, b). Also, the Constitution sets out the nature of the relationship between the incumbent and the laity: "It shall be the duty of the Incumbent and the Council [PCC[65]] to consult together and cooperate in all matters of concern and importance to the Parish" (Church in Wales, 2016c, p. 5, Part III, 8.2). In addition, the PCC is accountable to the Annual Vestry Meeting[66]. Thus, both

[65] Parochial Church Council (required to meet at least four times a year)
[66] Broadly, the meeting of those on the church's electoral roll together with the clergy of the parish.

accountability and collaboration are built-into the constitutional framework of the Church in Wales and Doe (2002) notes that "there is persuasive judicial authority that consultation and co-operation must not be a sham" (p. 81).

Parish clergy, with archdeacons and area deans, constitute the majority of the ordained diocesan 'team'. Alongside these ordained individuals there are a variety of lay diocesan officers (mostly but not exclusively involved with property, legal and finance). Each diocese usually operates with a smaller Bishop's staff or senior staff as they are sometimes styled, and they can be a mix of ordained and lay people. Similarly, parishes and ministry areas often have a standing committee of the PCC, a ministry team, or some other form of leadership team that helps move forward the work of the larger body. It is these smaller teams that I am thinking of predominantly in this chapter because they set the tone and style of working together, both for a diocese and a parish or ministry area.

6.2 Participants' experience

Each of my participants recalled episodes in their ministry where fruitful team working has been possible and satisfying. For each, there has been a sense in which those positive experiences have functioned as a resource to encourage them for future ministry, perhaps especially so when ministry has been difficult. Andrew, for instance, spoke at length about his experience and the way it informs his current practice. I will use his interview to introduce themes that were also present (albeit in a more fragmented form) in many of the other interviews.

Andrew spoke of the sense of fulfilment he found in working with others. Looking back over the span of his ministry, he realises that he prospers when working alongside colleagues:

> In my 29 years
> probably only for two maybe three of those
> have I not worked with other people in a team
> I know that I function best and I'm happiest within a team.
> so I've had lots of colleagues over the years
> all of whom I've really enjoyed working with
> some I've had better relationships with

but I've never had bad relationships
and I consider that a profound blessing really.

A highlight of his early years as a curate came as a result of being given responsibility, which together with being credited with status (symbolic capital) made him "feel empowered in all sorts of new and exciting ways":

There was a step-change moving to the second parish
which was a team ministry …
and suddenly in team meetings
my voice carried the same amount of weight as his or his
It took me quite a while to get used to that

He also recognises that at ordination, he had joined a hierarchical organisation. He endorses hierarchy as being necessary, but it is also a supportive, enabling structure where the leader provides a good deal of practical and emotional holding.

I recognised of course that there has to be a level of hierarchy
somebody at the end of the day carries the can …
I remember to this day
[the Rector] saying
look if you see something that needs doing
don't worry about bringing it back
do it
If you screw it up, I'll support you.

Also, within this hierarchy, disagreement is acceptable and may result in decisions contrary to the opinion of the Rector – the one who holds the most significant role and positional power (symbolic and cultural capital).

Sometimes we'd disagree
and the Rector would have to give a judgment
but it might not be the one that he wanted
if the rest of us felt strongly that it should go a different way

Many of the elements of Andrew's experience appear in standard texts on team building (e.g. Adair, 2009, Chapter 2; West, 2012, Chapter 1). It seems that

relationships in this team are sufficiently robust that they can cope with disputes and times of stress. There is also a sense of listening to one another, of valuing the contributions of each, and a non-competitive maturity on the part of the Rector that allows others to flourish and grow. Andrew acknowledges that the relationships he has experienced in teams over the years have been variable in depth, but none have been unhealthy. At several points in the interview, Andrew characterises the model he saw in action in those early years as "absolutely foundational" for his later practice as a Team Rector:

> I remember the Rector saying to me
> at the interview before I joined
> teams work if there is a good quality of relationships
> and that doesn't mean that you're going to agree over everything
> [or] you're going to have the same churchmanship
> or anything like that,
> but if you can respect and love each other
> then you deal with everything else
> and there was so much respect and love from him
> and indeed from others within the team
> as they came and went.
>
> I think I learned at that stage
> I couldn't have learned it anywhere else
> because I haven't had that experience anywhere else.
> I learned then, for me at least, what makes a team work
> and that's what I've tried to replicate.

It is of particular interest that Andrew remembers and recognises that a functioning team does not depend upon like-mindedness regarding Church tradition or theological stance. Most of my interview participants testified to similar experiences and spoke of rich experiences of working with people they differed from, sometimes in radical ways. Lucy, for example, worked for several years alongside colleagues who held quite different theological perspectives to her own:

> We were all from different churchmanships
> and we did things in different ways.

[the Team Rector] was good
he never tried to make us all be the same
but we had the same kind of values and goal
    of wanting to build up the church
    wanting to help people get to know the Lord
and wanting to encourage them to be part of the church family.

So, though we went about it in different ways
our theology was different
what I believe was going on at baptism
and what Gareth believed would be different things
which was expressed in how we did it.

Nevertheless, our goal was the same
the way Jim led it
we were able to flourish in our own way
and it worked really well
and I think the parish worked well with it.

That was really good.

6.3 Organisational Citizenship

In their reflections, both Andrew and Lucy portray teams where there is a positive flow of emotions and mutual regard for one another. West (2012) draws attention to the constructive environment that is created by such "pro-social" behaviour and "organizational citizenship":

> When we feel positive emotions we think in a more flexible, open-minded way, and consider a much wider range of possibilities than if we feel anxious, depressed or angry. This enables us to accomplish tasks and make the most of the situations we find ourselves in. We are also more likely to see challenges as opportunities rather than threats (Chapter 1, "Task and Social Elements of Team Functioning").

Following on from this, we can represent the practice of collaborative team-work that Andrew and Lucy experienced in the diagram below. The four quadrants of the circle represent the concrete experience within the team, while the outer

rectangles suggest the ethos that supports that experience. The circular arrows indicate that each of the components (both the quadrants and rectangles) are mutually reinforcing[67].

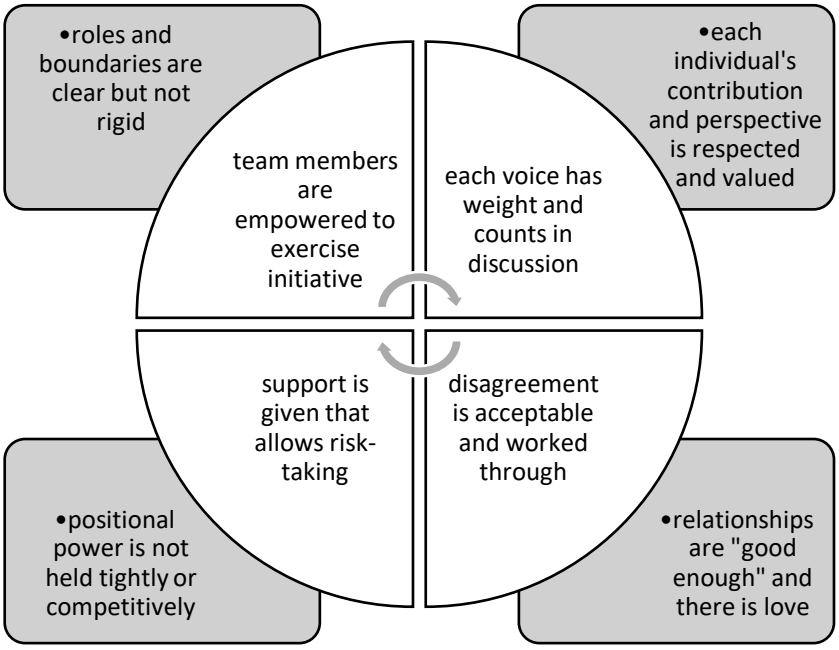

Figure 2: Relational Attributes in Andrew and Lucy's teams

Significantly, the quality of the relationships is the essential element that sustains the practice of collaboration. Andrew's comment, "there was so much respect and love", and Lucy's observation that "the way Jim led it we were able to flourish", both point to relationships as of vital importance. Andrew returned to the theme of the fundamental importance of relationships in teams later in his interview, focussing especially on the "desire" and "work" that is necessary to maintain the ties between people.

> Sometimes
> in any close relationship
> you have to [have]
> a desire
> [and]

[67] The phrase "good enough" in the diagram derives from Donald Winnicott's idea of the mother who does not have to be perfect for her child to thrive, only to be good-enough. See, for example https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p018qf36

work to make it work
and put the effort in.

Like Lucy, he believes that what helps to unite the team and makes the effort worthwhile is having a sense of common purpose

If we are
fractured and fragmented
well then
our effectiveness in what we're trying to do
[to] strengthen God's kingdom
in this corner of the vineyard
is going to be negatively impaired
and we don't want that because
we're all working towards
the same ultimate goal.

So there's a desire to
do this for God
I think
as well as for each other
and for the parish.

The team's vision and purpose itself creates a common bond despite differences of personality and perspective. Andrew identifies that spending time together in prayer is essential to what it means to be a Christian team and how prayer helps to bond the team.

We are together
on a number of occasions a week
and for the office and so on
and for Eucharists.

If we lost that altogether
I think we'll lose a crucial
unifying factor
and a crucial element

of what it means
to be a Christian team.

As well as time spent in prayer, he also relates how investing in time spent on social events and team-building days contributes to the sense of attachment to one another. Moreover, the ensuing attachments help to build trust and open the way to sharing hopes, a process that, in turn, creates vision and purpose.

There isn't much time
but there's got to be some time
we actually build it into the diary
and make sure
that we just occasionally have pure social events
an annual day out somewhere to *N.*

We'd call it a team-building day
and we weren't allowed to talk about church
and other times
we'd go away
and we'd have a day for the team
for strategy planning
but that's a different kind of day.

To summarise, we can say that what Andrew and Lucy's different teams do is work at the practices of:

- Being committed to their relationships with one another
- Having a strong sense of a shared vision and purpose, grounded in God
- Spending time together in prayer, planning, and keeping company with one another

In this way, the team exhibits a sense of direction and purpose, and team members feel both valued and able to contribute.

Stevens & Campion (1994, 1999), identify the Key Skills and Abilities (KSAs) necessary for this sort of effective teamwork. These fall under five domains of first, conflict resolution; second, collaborative problem solving; third, communication;

fourth, goal setting; and fifth, planning and task coordination. Each of these domains is a highly skilled relational task in its own right, and Lucy and Andrew's teams exhibit proficiency in a number of these areas.

6.4 Psychological Safety

We gain further insight into the critical value of good relationships for teamwork via research regarding the construct of 'psychological safety' in teams. For Edmondson & Lei (2014), psychological safety describes an awareness that the team is a safe enough environment in which to take the risk of being vulnerable, of expressing an opinion, of taking initiative, or of sharing knowledge and information without the threat of being belittled, shamed, or put down (p. 24). Psychological safety is not a descriptor for a risk-free environment. On the contrary, it is most valuable in high-stakes situations that are often chaotic and where solutions do not carry certainty. Concerning team relationships, "safety is not the same thing as comfort; it encourages risk" (West, 2012, Chapter 7, Box 12).

Much of the research on psychological safety has been conducted in the field of healthcare where patient well-being is paramount, and mistakes can be costly, if not fatal. In that particular arena, knowledge is expanding and highly specialised, making cross-disciplinary teamwork necessary but, in reality, difficult to carry out. Also, there are well-established hierarchies within and between specialisms that make it challenging to speak across professional boundaries (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006, p. 943). In such an environment, it is vitally important that each team member has a voice to represent their own speciality and insights, and that discussion about mistakes is blame-free. In the absence of these conditions, catastrophic errors become more likely as the team fails to listen to significant but, perhaps, low-status expertise; or slip-ups and oversights are not voiced because of fear of repercussions. Consequently, the team does not learn and develop its practice (p. 943) and potentially risky behaviours continue.

Nembhard & Edmondson (2006) also draw out further important issues about voice in relation to status and position within a hierarchy. For those who have high symbolic capital through such things as role, gender, age, ethnicity, or professional

expertise, there is significantly less risk involved in voicing their opinion or expertise. They are far less likely to be contradicted, cut-off, or questioned, and consequently, they become acclimatised to speaking freely and with ease. The opposite holds for those of low status. The risks involved in speaking up or even correcting or contradicting their 'superiors' are significant in terms of emotional exposure.

Furthermore, those of lower status recognise that those above them usually hold the keys to successful outcomes in practical things like performance reviews and career progression. Even in reasonably benign teams, the deference toward more experienced and knowledgeable colleagues who likely have positions of higher status can act as a powerful form of self-censorship (pp. 944-947). An additional and essential observation here is that the team leader is often unaware of the restraint on speaking that the lower status team members experience. Because they can make their own voice count with relative ease, others' difficulties are generally invisible to them (p. 945).

Thus, psychological safety is a crucial construct for creating generative and effective collaborative teams. The consequences for team effectiveness are significant:

> If a leader takes an authoritarian, unsupportive, or defensive stance, team members are more likely to feel that speaking up in the team is unsafe. In contrast, if a leader is democratic, supportive, and welcomes questions and challenges, team members are likely to feel greater psychological safety in the team and in their interactions with each other (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006, p. 947).

6.4.1 Psychological Safety and Leader Inclusiveness

Returning to the experience of Andrew and Lucy, we can see that their description of good teams flowed from the approach of the team leader in fostering a psychologically safe space. Within that space, it was possible for them to risk being vulnerable and, in turn, contribute to the team using the Key Skills and Abilities (KSAs) noted above. "Leader inclusiveness" is the phrase that Nembhard & Edmondson (2006) in their research on multidisciplinary healthcare teams applied to the style of leaders who create such psychological safety for their teams.

> [W]e propose the construct of leader inclusiveness, defined as words and deeds by a leader or leaders that indicate an invitation and appreciation for others' contributions. Leader inclusiveness captures attempts by leaders to include others in discussions and decisions in which their voices and perspectives might otherwise be absent. It is related to team leader coaching behavior, which describes team leader behaviors that facilitate group process and provide clarification and feedback…, and to participative leadership, which describes leaders that consult with workers, participate in shared decision-making and delegate decision-making authority to subordinates… (p. 947).

In my discussion of hierarchy and deference in the Church in Wales in chapter five, I examined the work of Galinsky et al. (2014) on perspective-taking as a moderator of hierarchical power. Galinsky & Schweitzer (2015) add further nuance to this by also taking up this notion of psychological safety. Thus, perspective-taking is not merely about the explanation of decisions made at a higher level, but it is about an attitude of inclusion all the way through the process of arriving at a decision. Again, it is not about getting rid of hierarchy but knowing when the hierarchy is helpful, when it needs moderating, and how to make it successful. The differentiating principle is that "[f]or interdependent physical tasks, we need coordination", and this is where hierarchy is advantageous. However, "for complex, dynamic decisions, ones that require the involvement of different perspectives, hierarchy can lose and even kill". It is here that psychological safety can encourage an essential broad participation (Chapter 3, sec. "Finding the Right Balance: How Psychological Safety Helps Hierarchies Win Without Killing").

Another of my participants, William, a parish priest who has served on several diocesan working groups, describes something of the psychological safety he has experienced in connection with his bishop.

> ***William***
> I have a very good relationship with my bishop
> and I enjoy working for [him]
> he leaves me just to get on with whatever.

You can have a good one to one relationship with him
you can knock ideas out
and you can say your piece
and it'll be accepted
and if there's anything
that you feel needs addressing
it's taken on board
and addressed.

People like bishop *N*
invite a good serious discussion
you know
and I think he welcomes opinion
and robust debate
and disagreement
but it does not affect
your relationship with him
outside of that
you know.

That may be not something
that happens everywhere
in the Church in Wales
but I do think
I'm very fortunate
to have that kind of person as diocesan bishop.

William, like Andrew and Lucy, has a voice. From his perspective, his bishop's style of leadership creates a safe enough space so that he feels that his opinions matter and are heard. Consequently, he believes that he has a contribution to make and a part in helping the diocese to move ahead.

6.4.2 Psychological Safety Contested

What is of interest at this point is how William's experience is different from that of some of my other participants. One, from the same diocese as William, experienced the same bishop as creating anything but psychological safety or displaying

leadership inclusiveness. Others, from different dioceses, also described feelings of being excluded or marginalised by their bishop and diocesan hierarchy. The discussion in the previous chapter concerning othering of individuals or groups is relevant to this point and highlights that what feels inclusive to one may not feel inclusive to all.

It is worth remembering that psychological safety concerns the capacity of a group to allow individuals to do such things as raise concerns, admit mistakes, or allow for robust and open debate. That is not the same thing as paralysing a group with 'niceness' so that nothing happens for fear of hurting or excluding someone. Psychological safety promotes organisational citizenship, group cohesion and robust discussion so that the group can move forward collaboratively and accomplish its purpose or task. In effect, the organisation or group becomes a place of learning where the mature interaction of its members propagates the development or improvement of the group's practice – it grows in collaborative practice.

Simon and John both describe experiences of leader behaviours failing to create psychological safety within the organisation. They portray the defensiveness of leaders that, in turn, inhibits the expression of vulnerability by both leaders and other group members. Consequently, individual positions end up being guarded rather than explored and evaluated by the group. It is important to note that my participants were not scapegoating those who lead. They implied that the lack of psychological safety is endemic within the Church in Wales and wished for something different.

Simon begins by describing his first experiences of attending deanery chapter[68] meetings. His experience there was not one of psychological safety, and he saw the competitive stance of the clergy as similar to that exhibited by the bishops collectively. In other words, the patterns of behaviour are not exclusive to bishops but replicate throughout the system.

[68] A deanery is a grouping of parishes in a locality and facilitated by an Area Dean who is selected from the parish clergy. The Chapter is the meeting of the clergy of a deanery

Oh, I suppose
there should have been some notion of [collaboration]
in deanery chapter
but yet again
I mean
my experience initially in deanery chapter
was not so much of collaboration
but of
you know,
it's hard to describe really isn't it?

It's sort of more like
you know
as we said earlier
where the bishops were tribal chieftains
coming together for a bit of a pow-wow [laughter]
but each operating in their own domain [laughter].

The tone of the conversation in that part of the interview was notable for the way Simon seemed not to want to describe the Bishops, his colleagues, or himself in this way. The implication was that there should be a better way of cooperating rather than the meeting taking the form of a "pow-wow" of "tribal chieftains" with each concerned predominantly with their individual realm of concern.

John echoes similar concerns about the way the system shapes and moulds individuals into approaches that run counter to its ideals. He recognises that it is too easy to blame bishops and, like Simon, identifies that the behaviours run through the system. Also, in common with Simon's tone, he is hesitant about using, as he does, a harsh word like "dictator".

I think seriously we need to look
at the organisation
of our churches
and really question the culture
we're in at the moment
that actually turns good people

into almost
you know
the culture always seems to swamp you
you almost become
what you don't want to become.

I think there's [a] great temptation there
it's very easy to criticise the bishops
but, you know
almost the culture seems to force [you]
I don't know
into reactions which maybe aren't as thought out
as [they should be]
you know.

Even at the level here
as Rector
you always feel the temptation's there
because it's easier
you know
to play the dictator

6.4.3 Summary of Psychological Safety

The experience of William, Simon, and John demonstrates that leader inclusiveness to create psychological safety is not a straightforward task. It is easy for leadership teams, ministry teams or other organisational leadership groups to run into the snare of "groupthink" and make the space safe by excluding those who disagree or voice unwelcome concerns. The practice of collaboration then becomes an exercise among the like-minded rather than the diverse activity envisaged by such texts as 1 Corinthians 12. The above discussion indicates that a critical leadership role is that of creating psychological safety for as broad a group as possible and that listening actively to dissenting voices is vital.

6.5 Avoiding Groupthink

6.5.1 Defining Groupthink

West (2012) reasons that experiences like those of the above three participants reflect the consequences of "groupthink" within leadership teams. Following Irving Janis's 1982 analysis of the Kennedy administration's disastrous decisions for the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, he describes the conditions that cause groupthink to arise in a team:

> 1. The team is a highly cohesive group of individuals who are more concerned with their own cohesiveness and unanimity than with quality of decision making.
> 2. The group typically insulates itself from information and opinions from outside and particularly those that go against the group view.
> 3. Members of the group rarely engage in any kind of systematic search through the available options for appropriate solutions, choosing instead to go with the first available option on which there is a consensus.
> 4. The group is under pressure to achieve a decision.
> 5. One individual dominates the group – this is a particularly important factor in the development of groupthink, especially if it is a dominant leader. (West, 2012, Chapter 8, sec. "Groupthink").

6.5.2 Groupthink experienced

The experience of Simon, William, and John, whereby some feel included in diocesan discussion and decision-making while others feel excluded, arises from a combination of several of the above factors. As a newly ordained curate, I observed my training incumbent who spoke of having "got rid" of a "power block" that had surrounded the previous incumbent. I noted that he seemed to operate with his own close-knit group of supporters, and I considered that he had simply replaced one power-block with another. Since then, through reflection on my own

leadership and observation of colleagues, I have lived with the question of how we can make decisions that are richer and broader than being merely the product of an "in" group of like-minded people? In other words, how could I help a group like a church council to avoid groupthink and actively listen to the contrary voices – especially given that such voices are not always eloquent and frequently use language that conveys frustration and even anger? Moreover, the biblical testimony of the prophets and the traditions of lament, caution that in the lone voice of dissent it may be possible to discern 'the word of the Lord'. True collaboration is not about merely listening to and working with only those who agree or will feign agreement with me.

6.5.3 Refining the concept

While Janis's original work is referenced widely regarding collaborative group processes (e.g. J. Lewis-Anthony, 2009, Chapter 13; G. Morgan, 1997, Chapter 7; Nash, Nash, & Pimlott, 2012, Chapter 2; West, 2012, Chapter 8) it is also the subject of widespread critique. In particular, the two notions that group cohesiveness and external stress and time pressure lead to poor decision-making have been contested in the literature (e.g. Hart, 1991, pp. 247–256).

Schafer & Crichlow (2010) determined that not all poor-quality decisions are the result of groupthink (p. 7). Instead, "how decision-making groups are structured and perform [has] a powerful effect on the policies that come out of them" (p. 237). The significant takeaway is that leaders have the opportunity to affect group outcomes, for good or ill, through the group structures and processes that they fashion (p. 237). Notably, distrustful leaders "only take in information from a limited number of voices,… process that information in ways that privilege parts of that already-constricted information flow,… stereotype their surroundings, and… see limited opportunities for cooperation" (p. 238). The converse is also true that supportive and trusting leaders create more diverse groups that produce better outcomes (p. 239).

Coupled with the question of a leader's trust of their team(s), is an ability to hold power in a way that facilitates robust processes of interaction and discussion. Such robust processes are necessary to channel the often-competitive energies and

differing opinions within a team and are vital for collaboration and sound decision-making.

> [T]he power and political acumen of a leader may have an important effect on guiding groups past the shoals of dangerous and destructive group structures and in successfully collecting and managing advice (p. 240).

Schafer & Crichlow (2010, p. 239) also found, contrary to Janis's original assertion, that cohesion can create greater efficiency provided that first or easy answers are not readily accepted. In other words, valuing disagreement and holding out for rigour and depth must be built into the process and demanded by the group and its leader(s).

> Setting clear lines of authority and communication, keeping groups open to new and different ideas, keeping them connected to a variety of other political actors and sources of information, fostering teamwork, keeping a healthy eye on potential problems and vulnerabilities, and filling top jobs with experienced and knowledgeable individuals all fit with Janis's preferred solution to negative group dynamics: "vigilant decision making" (p. 242)

Additionally, and somewhat counterintuitively, they found that situational stress or time pressure did not have the negative effect that Janis had argued for initially. This finding implies that where teams have vigorous and healthy processes and leadership, they continue to perform well even under stressful conditions – indeed, the pressure may help them to perform even better.

6.5.4 Summary of Groupthink

While the concept of Groupthink may seem a negative construction, an awareness of its features opens the path to richer collaborative working. Rather than difficult voices being unwelcome and characterised as being part of 'the awkward squad', there comes a desire to include, to test different perspectives and priorities, and to maintain good-enough relationships. With skilled facilitation of structure and process (including behaviours), a broader consensus may be achieved.

6.6 Collaborative leadership

In the discussion above, I have tried to engage my participants' experience (as captured in their reflections) with some of the noteworthy literature concerning effective teamwork. Each of the three steps above concentrated on the relationality that is at the centre of collaboration and successful teamwork. The first step was into pro-social behaviour and organisational citizenship and articulated the interaction of positive individual attitudes and the team environment (habitus and field); the task of the leader is to set the tone and create the field conditions for the team to relate well. That progressed to step two and consideration of psychological safety and how group learning and reflexivity is enhanced when leaders create a safe environment for lower status/capital but skilled individuals to contribute. Finally, avoiding groupthink can assist leaders in listening to varied (even contradictory) voices to reach more robust and richer group decisions[69]. These relational processes cannot exist in a vacuum, and below I turn to theological deliberation on the theme of relationality that I believe will give the steps a firmer grounding.

6.7 Theological perspectives

6.7.1 Hermeneutics again

In Chapter 2 of this thesis[70], I explained my aim of reading the Church in Wales with the twofold motivation or hermeneutic of Paul Ricoeur (1970): "willingness to suspect, willingness to listen; vow of rigor, vow of obedience" (p. 27). In subsequent chapters, my argument has oscillated between these two modes of critique – suspicion and retrieval (listening).

Accordingly, my use of Appreciative Inquiry as a method of listening gained a counterbalance in the 'thinking tools' of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology (Chapter 3). I augmented that reflection on practice by giving attention to virtue and the potency of traditional Christian communal practices to shape character and identity. In Chapter 4, I returned to Bourdieu's hermeneutic of suspicion with my field analysis

[69] A by-product of this sort of process is that people feel listened to even if decisions go against them.
[70] Section 2.5.3.2

of the Church in Wales and complemented that with a consideration of the promissory nature of baptism and ordination and a plea for a more thoroughgoing theology of the *laos*, the whole people of God. From my reflections on the use and misuse of power, and structural sin in Chapter 5, I turned to listen to the New Testament and Paul's understanding of the wisdom of God and the power of the cross. Stemming from that, I considered how Wink fuses the twofold hermeneutic in his notion of Christians holding together the recognition that The Powers are simultaneously good, fallen, and in need of redemption.

Ricoeur (1970) reasons that the consequence of utilising both a hermeneutic of suspicion and of retrieval (or listening) is a critical reappraisal of the object under discussion together with a willingness to re-enter its world afresh:

> No longer, to be sure, [with] the first faith of the simple soul, but rather the second faith of one who has engaged in hermeneutics, faith that has undergone criticism, postcritical faith. … It is a rational faith, for it interprets; but it is a faith because it seeks, through interpretation, a second naiveté. … "Believe in order to understand, understand in order to believe" (p. 28).

My goal in this chapter is not one of suspicion or diagnosis but a desire to 're-enter' the world of the Church in Wales bearing the gifts of my hermeneutic of suspicion – the unmasking and illuminating of the mechanisms and attitudes that kill fruitful collaborative efforts. As a result, in the first part of this chapter, I have focussed on three processes of effective teamwork that highlight its relational nature. Reinforced, such methods can amplify collaboration and counteract harmful influences. I hope that this is the beginning of what Wright (1992) refers to as a "hermeneutic of love." In such a hermeneutic, the object or text is not reduced to "what the reader can or cannot understand at the moment." Instead, it is valued even for its, at times, baffling complexity (p. 64). To engage with the Church in Wales from the perspective of a hermeneutic of love is to seek its true identity, meaning and purpose.

Thus, in the following sections of this chapter, I will seek to reflect theologically about collaborative ministry. Using the notion that the church represents a

redeemed sociality, I will argue that its true identity and character is revealed in relational, collaborative practices such as those described above. In doing so, I will be trying to draw together and expand upon ideas of relationality that I have introduced earlier in this thesis. Additionally, I will demonstrate how such a redeemed sociality responds to the critique raised by my hermeneutic of suspicion.

6.7.2 An ecclesial sociality of creation and redemption

Walter Wink, in his development of Stringfellow's thought, draws his analysis of the Powers from a theology of creation that affirms the potential of human society. He holds this alongside a recognition of the fallen nature of human striving that is grounded in a theology of redemption (the Powers are good; fallen; must be redeemed). Pickard (2012b), similarly, argues for the "Church as a social form of Christianity" (p. 85) deriving its life not only from its understanding of being a redeemed community but also as a community that sees its "form of life inherent in the very nature of creation" (p. 89). Here he draws deeply on the work of Daniel Hardy and proceeds to reason that the Church's sociality is first "given by God in creation" and then redeemed and "renewed in Christ and the Spirit" (p. 88).

The consequence of drawing first on the doctrine of creation and the concept of the *imago Dei* is that the call to relationality is given not just to the Church but to the whole of human society. That, in turn, allows for an affirmation of God's activity in the world beyond the Church (D. W. Hardy, 1996, pp. 199–203). The move to the doctrine of redemption avoids a naïve positivity about the world but recognises, with Wink, the fallen nature of the Powers. For Pickard, a further implication of locating sociality, first in creation, is that the call to being "persons-in-relation" [is] not simply to other persons but to creation and all that this involves" (Pickard, 2012b, p. 95).

D. W. Hardy (2001), himself argues that in Anglicanism, "there is no straightforward 'doctrine of the Church' but an ongoing theological formation of the practice of church life" (p. 238)[71]. This practice of church life is itself an outcome of the

[71] Sedgwick (2018) makes a similar point with reference to Anglican moral theology. It is, he says, "pastoral rather than juridicial. It is not about determining the right decision on the administration

church's social character. For Hardy, the church, like any society, expresses its inner meaning, which is "potentially wisdom" (p. 238), through its outward patterning, structure, and relations. However, for the church, this meaning is not generated internally:

> The distinctive character of a *church* is that it finds the meaning of society in God, and seeks to bring society into closer and closer approximation to the truth that also frees people to be fully themselves, that is to the truth of God (p. 240).

The "truth" of its character in God is a profound sociality which expresses the holiness of God. That holiness is "itself a set of relations" articulated in a Trinitarian understanding of God. Thus:

> The holiness of God is not only relational and complex, but also inherently dynamic and performative. The performance of holiness in God has a counterpart anticipated within it, that is the performance of this holiness by human beings in history (p. 15).

In the enactment of this holiness in the world, Hardy also draws attention to how a Trinitarian understanding invites us to a deeper, more complex and diverse conception of human relationships. He observes that a great deal of public and even religious life defines individuals in terms of extrinsic rather than intrinsic properties. Consequently, relations are simplified and "people are more likely to be seen as units" according to some external category or process (such as wealth or education) by which they can be explained, managed, or manipulated (D. W. Hardy, 1996, p. 179). This managerial tendency manifests itself in "the pressure to greater productivity" so that "we forget how to relate to others except in … system-specific ways" (D. W. Hardy, 2001, p. 35).

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of the sacrament of penance … as in much Roman Catholic moral theology since the Reformation. Nor is it primarily about obedience to the Word of God, as in Calvinism and Lutheranism. Instead it presupposes a community in which Anglican moral theology will be exercised, a priest or pastor who will lead that community and an awareness that living together in community throws up difficult and searching questions, in terms both of social justice and personal morality" (pp. 11-12).

According to Hardy, even the prevailing emphasis on the individual in western culture is the result of stress on extrinsic properties. There are direct relations, but that does not imply an obligation (although it does not rule out having a sense of responsibility for others):

> The view is based on several premises: (1) the human being is ontologically prior to society … without reference to other human beings; (2) each human being is only contingently related to others … either through accidents of contact or through choice; (3) each human being is only historically related to others (these relations arise only in, and last only so long as they are maintained, in finite existence) (D. W. Hardy, 1996, p. 179)

What results is a "reduced notion of true society" whereby the interests of those who "control the processes by which human beings are related" are maintained (p. 182). The similarity here between Hardy and Bourdieu's notions of interest and reproduction[72] is striking. However, whereas Bourdieu unmasks and calls, somewhat vaguely, for solidarity and resistance to oppressive definitions and structures, Hardy seeks, first, to locate the meaning of human relations and solidarity within a Trinitarian framework of intrinsic relations. Here people exist in relation to one another as bearers of the divine image *and* in the light of the ultimate purposes of God's redeeming work in creation. Out of this understanding, practice and action become possible and are capable of being shaped Godward (D. W. Hardy, 1996, pp. 185–186, 2001, pp. 26–28).

Catherine Mowry LaCugna (1991), in her appraisal of Trinitarian theology, makes comparable claims concerning the significance for Christian living of a relational understanding of God. She grounds her reasoning in the theological thinking of the early church and a retrieval of the arguments of the Cappadocians. She claims that they "predicated [*hypostasis* (person)] as prior to and constitutive of *ousia* (nature) … [in contrast to the] Latin-formed mind that wants to make *ousia* an inner core of reality …" (p. 389). The necessary conclusion is that "apart from the divine persons

[72] Section 3.2.2 and 3.2.5 above

there is no divine nature, and there is no God" (p. 390). For LaCugna, the significance of the movement is such that:

> The divine unity was no longer located in the Father-God who was prior to or greater than everyone and everything else. Instead the divine unity and divine life were located in the communion among equal though unique persons, not in the primacy of one person over another. (LaCugna, 1993, pp. 87–88)

According to LaCugna, this change of emphasis draws us to focus our understanding of God on his saving work supremely revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That life reveals "God for us" and sets the pattern for our own life and practice:

> Mutuality rooted in communion among persons is a non-negotiable truth about our existence, the highest value and ideal of the Christian life, because for God mutual love among persons is supreme. God, the Unoriginate Origin, is personal, not an impersonal or pre-personal substance. God's Covenant with Israel, the ministry and life of Jesus Christ, the new bonds of community created by the Spirit, are icons of God's personal nature. (LaCugna, 1991, p. 399)

The implication flowing from the above arguments is that collaborative ministry is not just a handy or efficient way of doing things in the Church that nicely includes lots of other people. Instead, it belongs to the nature of the created order and is a function of human beings bearing the divine image – being creatures in relation to one another and to the created order. Both creation and redemption imply connectivity sourced in God (p. 84). Thus, we find that collaboration is fundamental to the life and character of the Church but is not limited to the Church.

> Koinonia has to do with a fundamental connectivity between God, the world, and all living things … Such koinonia is encoded into the very being of creation. The story of redemption is a story of Christ rejoining people, races and the rest of creation. This is the good news which overcomes sin and broken bonds. … What is even more remarkable is

> that God invites the body of Christ to become the new experiment in the communion of the Holy Spirit. (IATDC, 2008, p. 72, note 26)

6.7.3 Church life and order

In his reflection on the nature of the Church, Rowan Williams (2004) makes a parallel point when he states that the Church is not primarily an organisation with focussed, clear goals. Its reason for being is located outside its internal organisational needs. As such, he warns against a view of the Church as:

> … essentially a lot of people who have something in common called Christian faith and [who] get together to share it with each other and communicate it to other people 'outside' (p. 2).

Such a perspective concentrates on what individuals decide and attempts to make a human community run better, to be more organised and efficient. The priorities are those of the moment and, by and large, fixed on the self-preservation of the Church. Williams understands this view to be a long way from the New Testament view of the Church.

> [T]he Church is first of all a kind of space cleared by God through Jesus in which people may become what God made them to be (God's Sons and daughters), and that what we have to do about the Church is not first to organise it as a society but to inhabit it as a climate or a landscape. (R. Williams, 2004, p. 2).

Martyn Percy makes a similar distinction between task-oriented, functionalist approaches to the church and behaviourist approaches that inquire about the character of the community that is the Church. Drawing on Philip Selznick's contrast between an organisation and an institution, he claims that:

> … organizations exist for utilitarian purposes, and when they are fulfilled, the organization may become expendable. Institutions, in contrast, are 'natural communities' with historic roots that are embedded in the fabric of society. They incorporate various groups that may contest each other, the institution, values and the like (Percy, 2010, Chapter 7 para. 4).

This understanding views the Church as, principally, a place of being rather than doing – a dynamic social and spiritual place where order, hierarchy and power serve the transformative prompting of the Holy Spirit (Pickard, 2012b, pp. 162–164). Clearly, there are things to do: worship to organise, study groups to meet, pastoral care to be exercised, and so on. Nonetheless, all these things ought to be a means of creating space that is all about growth and maturity. As the author of Ephesians puts it, "… until all of us come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."
(Eph. 4.13, NRSV).

In such a space, the connectivity via our relationships is not the means to an end; it is the end itself; it is not only the most effective way to get things done; it is a means of participating in the life of God.

6.7.4 The limits of Social Trinitarian models

Into this 'space' of the Church where Christian character, maturity and mutuality are the priority, Pickard (2012b) injects an essential note of caution. Social Trinitarian concepts of God are frequently called upon to act as the model for human community and the Church: "When God is understood as a differentiated plurality operating in harmonious relation there is significant scope, it appears, for the Church to be patterned after such a God" (p. 102). The problem with the argument is that there is a certain circularity to it in "the tendency of advocates … to propose an idealized doctrine of God in order to support a pre-determined ideology for a reformed social world" (p. 105). Further, it fails to deal adequately with tension and conflict. If the harmonious world of God as triune being is the model, what are we to make of conflict where people are opposed because they care deeply about the issues? (Schrock-Shenk & Ressler, 1999, Chapter 1). Pickard reflects the thought of Mark Chapman that God's passion for the world means his involvement in tension, conflict and debate and that a "harmonious God is of little assistance" in the face of injustices and oppression (Chapman, 2001; Pickard, 2012b, p. 105).

6.8 Conclusion

The Church finds its origin and ultimate purpose in the Trinitarian nature of God as persons in communion. As such, it is called to understand its life within a sociality given by God in creation and redeemed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Its participation in this dynamic of creation, fall and redemption, lived in relation to the Trinitarian God, means "living God's life: living from and for God, from and for others" (LaCugna, 1991, pp. 400–401). Thus, the nature of the ecclesiology propounded by Williams and Pickard gives primacy to the character of the Church and second place to its tasks and goals within a particular context.

For these reasons, questions about how the Church functions as a hierarchy and how it exercises power are of the deepest concern. In Williams's terms, "[b]eing in the Church is being in the middle of [the] sacrificial action … of Christ's giving" (R. Williams, 2004, p. 3). It is to participate in the self-giving gift of God to the world and through its forms and structures to continually express "the fidelity of the Spirit praying Christ in us and into us…" (p. 14). Therefore, paying attention to power, the processes of a hierarchy, conflict or othering, for instance, is paramount, because how we organise reveals the body language of the Church. Like all body language, it speaks volumes about the character of the Church as an institution. Or, using Williams's metaphor, it reveals the nature of the space that the Church, in fact, is – and whether or not it is close to the sort of life-enhancing space that its gospel and rhetoric aspires to.

7 Conclusion – a ‘body language’ of collaboration

7.1 Introduction

The title of this thesis refers to collaborative ministry within the context of a quest and questions whether it is an elusive practice within the Church in Wales. The history of reports, writing and preaching about collaboration or the related theme of the place of the laity in the Church would suggest that the title is mostly accurate – the Church has failed to make collaborative ministry part of its regular repertoire. However, there are other ways of seeing things.

First, while the title may be partly, even mostly accurate, it is not wholly true. Each of my participants drew upon positive experiences of teamwork in the past to inform what they would like to see in the present and future. They were also inspired by Biblical and theological insights about the Body of Christ, and being “members one of another” (Rom. 12.5, NRSV). The Church’s repertoire does include collaboration even if its use is infrequent or its coverage is patchy.

Second, a quest also implies a destination that is not reached straightforwardly or an object of desire that is not easily attained. The quest is only finally a failure if it is abandoned. Likewise, practice may mean the application of a body of knowledge, or it may mean the activity of repeated rehearsal in order to become proficient at some skill or activity. For both words, there is a sense of ongoing desire, aspiration and hope, and it is in these senses that I want to speak of the Church exhibiting a ‘body language’ of collaboration.

7.2 Summary

In this thesis, I have listened to my participants with an appreciative stance connected to the Biblical themes of thanksgiving and lament. Their reflections have been examined within a Bourdieusian analysis of the Church in Wales. That analysis has taken account of the way power is exercised within the field of the Church and related it to a theology of the Powers. I have also considered whether hierarchy is entirely the harmful patterning of structure that Greenwood (2013) often portrays (Chapter 7, sec. “After hierarchy?”). Additionally, I have considered the social processes that leaders and teams can employ to promote the positive relationships

that foster collaborative working. That exploration has been done in conversation with Trinitarian models of sociality.

7.3 Evaluation

The use of Appreciative Inquiry gave me a constructionist method of approaching my participants. Branson (2004) details one the cycles of inquiry known as the 4-I Model. It consists of four steps: Initiate, Inquire, Imagine, Innovate (Chapter 4-5). In terms of this project, the first two steps have predominated in the fieldwork and data collection, while the last two steps have been little more than in the background. Reed (2007) envisages that AI will be a thoroughly collaborative process and that a "key feature of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), … is that it involves the partnership and participation of a range of people who come together to explore their world" (p. 91). It is the web of relationships and perspectives that helps to create meaning.

Within the scope of this as an academic project, a fully participative process has not been possible. Nevertheless, in testing my perceptions through choosing to interview colleagues, a measure of collaboration has been achieved. Added to that is the sense of giving voice to my participants in the poetic transcription and my selection of extracts (Reed, 2007, pp. 155–160). Also, the connection of lament and thanksgiving with generativity has allowed for rich theological connections and a deeper listening to my participants' in both the initial interview and the recording.

A weakness of my approach has been its focus on clergy perspectives, missing out on the lay voice. Within the constraints of the project, I have gained a reasonable composite picture of clergy experience with some interesting variability – particularly about gender.

Using Bourdieu's reflexive sociology to analyse the Church in Wales in this research has been a venture into new territory. Chambers (2012) brief comment on Bourdieu in connection with social change and church growth and decline in Wales is among the scarce references to Bourdieu and religion in Wales (p. 234-235). Rey (2014) notes that Bourdieu's work on religion is shaped by his view "that religion in the modern world is in decline; and that religion's ultimate social function is to help

people make sense of their respective positions in the social order" (p. 57). His perspective is that hierarchical religious institutions "cling to power that is, as a function of modernity, inevitably slipping out of its grasp" (p. 57). A further point of debate in the literature concerns agency, and the possibility of resistance to dominating structures in a field and here Rey refers to Bourdieu's reference to fields as sites of struggle and competition. Even if it is limited, resistance is possible (p. 120-127).

There is a fruitful connection, too, with Pickard's critique of social Trinitarian models for the Church. In the previous chapter (sec. 6.7.3), we saw how God's involvement in conflict, tension and debate might provide a way into a more robust form of social Trinitarian thought.

Finally, in Bourdieu's studies of religion, the laity are generally conceived as being enclosed within the religious field, and he makes little room for the "creative agency of the laity" (Rey, 2014, pp. 124–125). That charge could easily be directed at this study, and a better theology of the laity would take full account of lay life outside the church. In that way, it would resist the temptation to equate the church with the work of the priest.

Have Bourdieu's thinking tools proved helpful? They have enabled me to think more deeply, and by using all of the components of what is a relational theory, I have a richer understanding of how a complex institution like the Church in Wales functions relationally.

7.4 Implications for Practice

7.4.1 In the Parish

I came to the Parish of Cowbridge at the end of September 2015, partway through the Professional Doctorate at Chester. Shortly after arriving, I worked on producing the Ministry Team Covenant that is in Appendix H. The research I had already conducted enabled me to recognise that forming strong relational bonds with clergy and lay colleagues in the Ministry Team would be essential. Therefore, setting out our expectations of one another should enable us to build trust and

commitment. We discussed this as a team and after amendment, agreed together to try it.

In formulating the document, we looked to the theological reflection that had been written in 2014 by Francis Bridger for the introduction of professional ministerial guidelines for clergy in the Church of England and the Church in Wales. In his reflection, Bridger contrasted covenant and contract models of agreement.

> The covenant partners are bound together not by a set of legal requirements but by the relational nexus of gracious initiative followed by thankful response. Covenant goes further than the carefully defined obligations contained within a contract to the need for further actions that might be required by love. (Bridger, 2014)

What I now recognise in the covenant we formulated are the elements of pro-social behaviour, psychological safety and the avoidance of groupthink by including different voices. This, of course, has had to be lived out in our day-to-day relationships and not exist only as a piece of paper. What has helped significantly here has been simply spending time with one another – usually in weekday prayers, followed by planning and a catch up over coffee in one of the many coffee shops in Cowbridge. On the surface, it could look like time-wasting, but the investment of time to build the capital of trust has proved invaluable.

Alongside this relational work by the clergy and key lay people, we instigated a major lay-led review of the governance structures of the PCC and other management functions of the parish. As a result, there are clear lines of accountability and the means to both initiate and monitor action effectively.

While it is not perfect, we are continuing to work on a combination of enabling structures and good relationships. In a parish environment where anxious and reactive behaviours were once commonplace (Steinke, 1993, Chapter 2), we are now seeing the pro-social behaviours that are modelled by key individuals being reproduced through the parish. Thus field, habitus, and capital synchronise to produce collaborative practice.

Jacobs (2000) describes how non-verbal communication, often referred to as body language, is present in any interaction between human beings. It is often the first communication we receive and may be conveyed through "facial expression, hand gestures and bodily posture (p. 30). By analogy, we can refer to the 'body language' of the Christian community, thus making a theological connection with the New Testament image of the Body of Christ. Therefore, the enabling governance structures, the modelling of pro-social behaviour by leaders, and spending time to accrue the capital of trust through resilient relationships, can be thought of as representing the non-verbal communication of the Body of Christ.

The place where this body language comes to the fore is at the Eucharist. First appearances may suggest that an Anglican liturgy is mostly pre-scripted and there is little room for body language. However, the written parts of the service could be read straight through in a relatively short time. Hence, a great deal is conveyed through tone of voice, posture, movement and eye contact. Sennett (2012) argues that rituals ingrain deep patterns into our lives, particularly "a rite like the Eucharist; perform it a thousand times and you will have ingrained it in your life. Its power will be a thousandfold greater than doing it just once" (p. 90). The 'performance' of the liturgy, then, is crucial in making visible by word and action the collaborative character of the church.

7.4.2 In the Diocese of Llandaff

In 2019 the Diocese has adopted a new vision and strategy under the three headlines of "Telling a Joyful Story, Growing the Kingdom of God, and Building Our Capacity for Good" (Diocese of Llandaff, 2019). The vision documents have been produced with an appreciative, generative approach in mind following a broad-based consultation process. The stated aim of the vision focusses on the subject of our character as a diocese: "How we will work together and who we will be is vital in what we aim to achieve." The objectives to be attained by 2023 include developing "team-working instincts and skills at every level of the Diocese [and] a strong lay voice within our decision-making". Therefore, this research has the potential to speak directly to the new direction of the diocese. In one part of the consultation process, I was able to use Appreciative Inquiry questions, and that

dataset is awaiting more analysis. Usefully, it contains many more lay voices from across the diocese, many of them with interesting stories.

7.5 Collaborative ministry – an elusive practice?

Is collaborative ministry an elusive practice? Yes and no. There are real signs of good practice in my participants, and I hear of other groups of clergy and lay people who are working well together. But the practice is not widespread, and there are as many groups of clergy and laity who are finding it hard or are unwilling to change from entrenched positions. In particular, unless a collaborative approach is fully embraced by those with hierarchical authority, it is unlikely to be the recognisable stance of the Body of Christ as expressed by the Church in Wales.

A 'body language' for the Church in Wales? As long as the desire is present to express the fundamental collaborative character of the Church and to see the life of the whole people of God flourish.

Appendix A: The Church in Wales – Terms Explained

(Church in Wales, a)

Parish

The Church in Wales is made up of over 900 parishes. If you live in Wales, you will live in a parish. Each parish covers a specific geographic area and is looked after by a cleric assigned to it. Parishes usually include one or more church buildings. …. In living in a parish, you are entitled to be married or buried in that parish.

Benefice

A cleric may be put in charge of one parish, or of several. A benefice is the description given to the area over which a cleric has responsibility.

Deaneries/Area Deans

Every benefice is part of a Deanery, which is a grouping of several benefices. Deanery activities are co-ordinated by an Area Dean (sometimes also called 'Rural Dean', but not to be confused with a Cathedral Dean), who also has responsibility for any vacant benefices within the Deanery. The post of Area Dean is usually taken by one of the senior clerics within the Deanery.

Dioceses, Archdeaconries and Archdeacons

The Church in Wales is geographically split up into six dioceses, each looked after by a Bishop. Each of these dioceses is subdivided into two or three archdeaconries – there are fifteen archdeaconries in Wales, as shown on the map. There is an Archdeacon appointed to each, and they are responsible to the Bishop for the administration of the Archdeaconry. Each Archdeaconry is further divided into Deaneries.

Cathedral Dean

Each of Wales' six dioceses has a Cathedral, which serves as the mother church of the diocese. It is also the church where the Bishop has his 'cathedra' or seat. Important events, such as the Installation of a new Bishop, will take place in the Cathedral. Each Cathedral has a Cathedral Dean appointed to run the Cathedral, along with the Chapter. Along with the Archdeacons, the Cathedral Dean is one of the most senior clerics in the diocese after the Bishop.

Chapter/Canon

Each Cathedral in Wales is managed by a chapter, made up of the Dean and a number of Canons, who are chosen from amongst the clergy serving in the diocese.

Cleric

We use the phrase 'cleric' on this website to signify someone who has been ordained in the Anglican Church and serves in the Church in Wales. Traditionally, those called by the church to priesthood spend twelve months serving as a deacon before being ordained priest. There are others who are called to a distinctive ministry as deacons. When you search for a cleric, you will be able to see the dates of their ordination as deacon and, if relevant, as priest. Whilst these are the dates at which a cleric starts their ministry as deacon or priest after their training, they may well have been involved with the church in different roles prior to these dates.

Curate

A 'Curate' is the name given to a cleric appointed to assist another cleric – a role traditionally taken in the early stages of their ministry.

Vicar/Rector
A Vicar or Rector is a cleric in charge of a parish.

[Incumbent
The holder of a Church in Wales office – usually a Vicar or Rector.

Ordinand
A person who has been selected for training and is undertaking a course of theological formation prior to ordination.

Reader Ministry
Readers are theologically trained lay people licensed by the Bishop to preach and lead non-sacramental worship.]

Ministry Area / Mission Area
Area means a parish or group of parishes formed for the effective proclamation of the Gospel in a particular area with a common administration as defined by any Diocesan Decree (Church in Wales, e, pt. II).

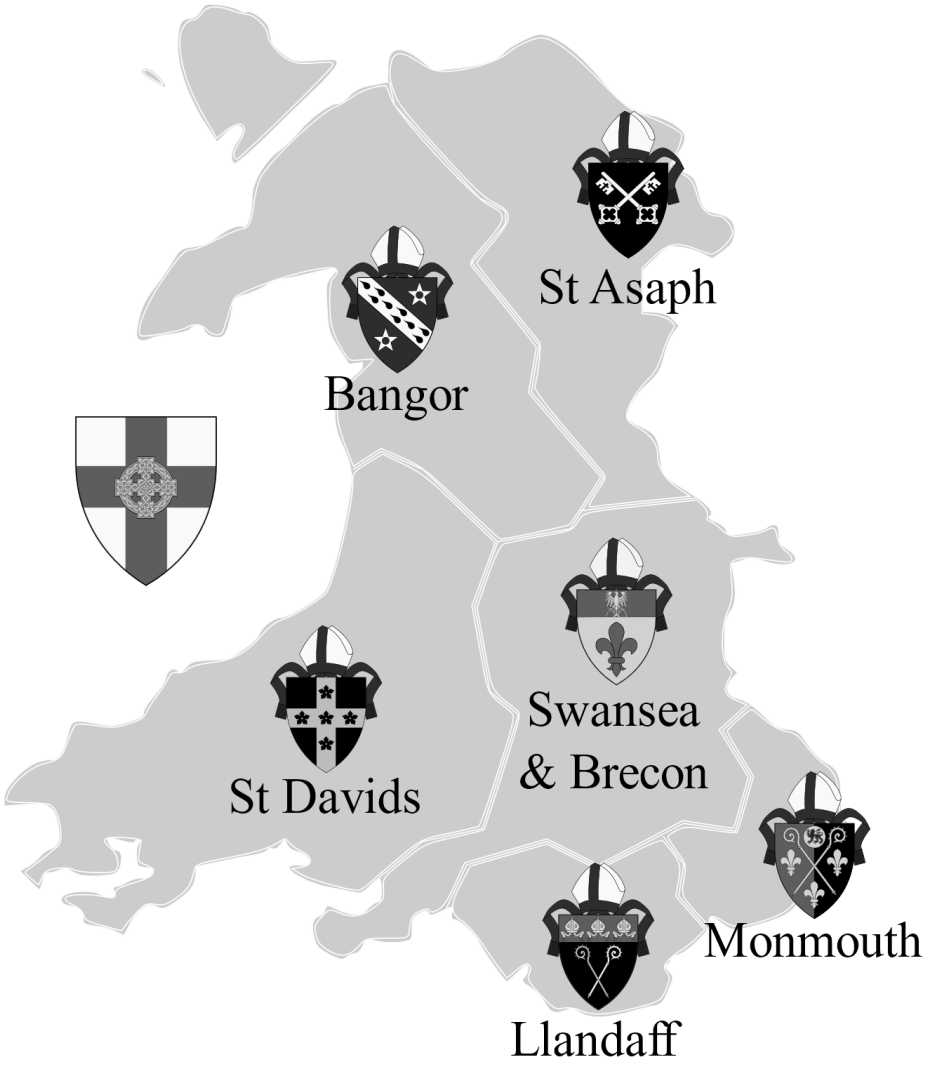


Figure 3: Map of the Dioceses of the Church in Wales

Appendix B: Participant information sheet

Participant information sheet

Short title of study

Joined and knitted together in love: facilitating collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales.

27th May 2014

Dear Friend,

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Stephen Adams
Dean of Ministry Development
St Michael's College,
54 Cardiff Rd
Cardiff CF5 2YJ
Email: Stephen.adams@stmichaels.ac.uk *Tel: 029 2083 8005*

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to understand people's experience of collaborative working in the church and to help people prayerfully imagine and describe a vision of what good working together would look like. The findings from the study will be used to help us work with you in the future development of your church and ministry. In addition it will help us to assess whether or not such projects would be of value to other churches and congregations across Wales.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you have been part of a course or programme run from St Michael's College and you are someone with a good understanding of the needs of your church.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the standard of care you receive in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign the consent form. This will give your consent for me to contact you to invite you to attend a focus group meeting and/or one-to-one meeting. At this meeting, you will have the opportunity to raise and discuss your views and experiences relating to the team work in the church. There will be up to ten others taking part and the meeting, which will be led by me, will last about an hour. With your permission (and that of the others in the group), the meeting will be audio taped. No-one will be identifiable in the final report.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

As a participant, it is possible that you may welcome the opportunity to share and discuss your views and experiences with other participants. By taking part, you will be contributing to the development of the church through sharing your views, which will hopefully benefit other parishes and congregations in the future.

What if something goes wrong?

If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact:

Professor Robert E. Warner,

Executive Dean of Humanities,

University of Chester

Parkgate Road

Chester CH1 4BJ

r.warner@chester.ac.uk
Tel. 01244 511980

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential so that only I as the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be written up in a research thesis. It is hoped that the findings may be used to improve church and congregation development projects. Individuals who participate will not be identified in any subsequent report or publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being carried at as part of my work for the Church in Wales at St Michael's College, Cardiff. This work includes studying for a Professional Doctorate (DProf) in Practical Theology with Chester University.

Who may I contact for further information?

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

Revd Stephen Adams
Dean of Ministry Development
St Michaels College
Llandaff
Cardiff CF5 2YJ
stephen.adams@stmichaels.ac.uk
029 2083 8005

Thank you for your interest in this research.

Appendix C: Consent form

Consent form

Title of Project: Joined and knitted together in love: facilitating collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales.

Name of Researcher: Stephen Adams

		Please initial box
1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet, dated 27th May 2014, for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my care or legal rights being affected.	☐
3.	I agree to take part in the above study.	☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix D: Interview Topics and Questions

Joined and knitted together in love: facilitating collaborative ministry in the Church in Wales.

Name of Researcher: Revd Stephen Adams

Questions

Call and Vocation

- *N.,* can you tell me a little about how you first came to ministry? What was your sense of call and vocation? What were your thoughts and feelings at the time?
- Thinking about the present, how would you describe your relationship with the church today?
- How would you describe your tradition?
- Past experience of collaborative working
- I'm interested in your experience of working with others in the church. Can you tell me about your best experiences of being part of a group or team? Perhaps you have some stories to tell?
- What did it feel like?
- What was happening to make it a good experience?
- Was there anything challenging about what was happening? How did you meet those challenges? What was significant in that experience?
- What was your contribution? What gifts/skills/qualities did you bring to the mix?

  If negative experiences are offered, follow those up with similar questions.

Summary questions

- So what, would you say, are the most valuable aspects of working in a group or team?
- What are people doing, saying or feeling to create good conditions for collaborative work?
- How, would you say, are people relating to one another when they work well together?

Collaborative working now

- Thinking about the church now, how would you describe its approach to team work? Do you have any stories or images to illustrate what it's like?
- When do you feel it is most enlivening? When does it feel deadening?

Practices and connecting with the wider community

- If we think about how we, as Christians, practise our faith, do you think there are any theological or spiritual practises, or disciplines, that particularly help us in this task of working together?

- If the church were to engage more deeply with these practices, how do you think it might help us to connect with our local communities? Perhaps, you have some stories or examples of this happening?
- What would help you most to develop these practices?
- Personally?
- For the life of your church and its community?

Imagining the Future

- If you were to imagine the Church of the future from God's perspective, what do you think it would look like? What would be your three wishes to make that come true? Describe what the church would look like as these wishes come true.
- Action
- What would help you most in doing your bit to help the church become more like this?
- What would you ask of the church?
- What practical steps could you offer?

Concerning this interview

- How have you found this interview? Please, be honest; I need to make sure that these interviews are also helpful to interviewees.
- Would you like to follow up this interview in any way? If so, how? I'm very happy to give you a copy of the transcript and to talk through how I think it will feature in my research.

Appendix E: Ethics Approval

University of Chester

Faculty of Humanities

Dean of Humanities
Professor Robert E Warner
BA, MA, PhD, FRSA
Direct Line 01244 511980
r.warner@chester.ac.uk

The Revd Stephen Adams
St Michael's College
54 Cardiff Rd
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2YJ

13 June 2014

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your submission to the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee, which was considered by the Committee on 11 June 2014. The Committee is conscious of the work involved in the preparation of such research proposals and is grateful for your attention to this.

The Committee would you like to praise you for such an exemplary application. It has been decided that your proposal should be approved and you are therefore now free to pursue the project in the knowledge that it has been approved by the University.

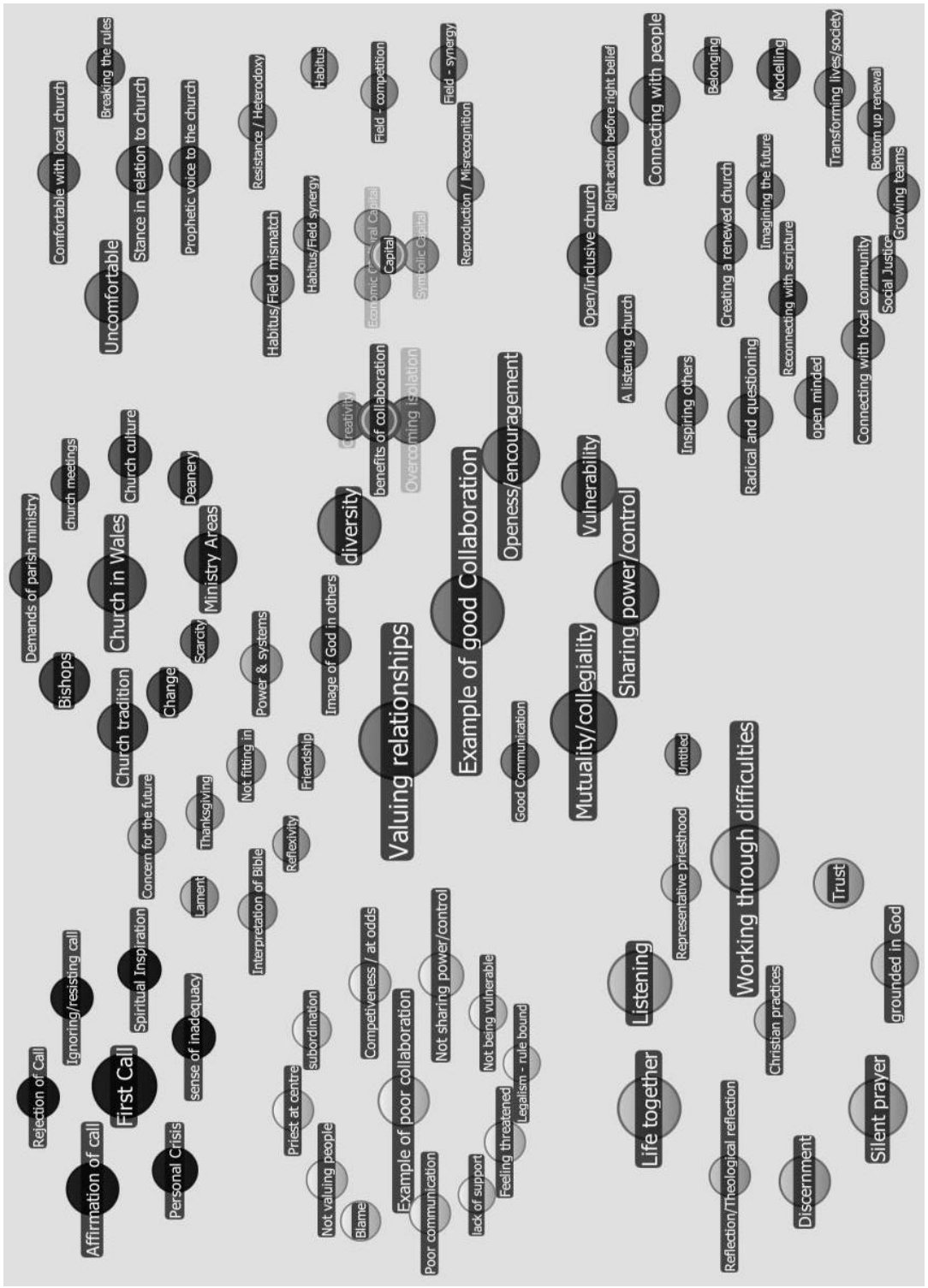
Please get in touch with me if you have any queries about this letter or your next steps.

Yours sincerely,

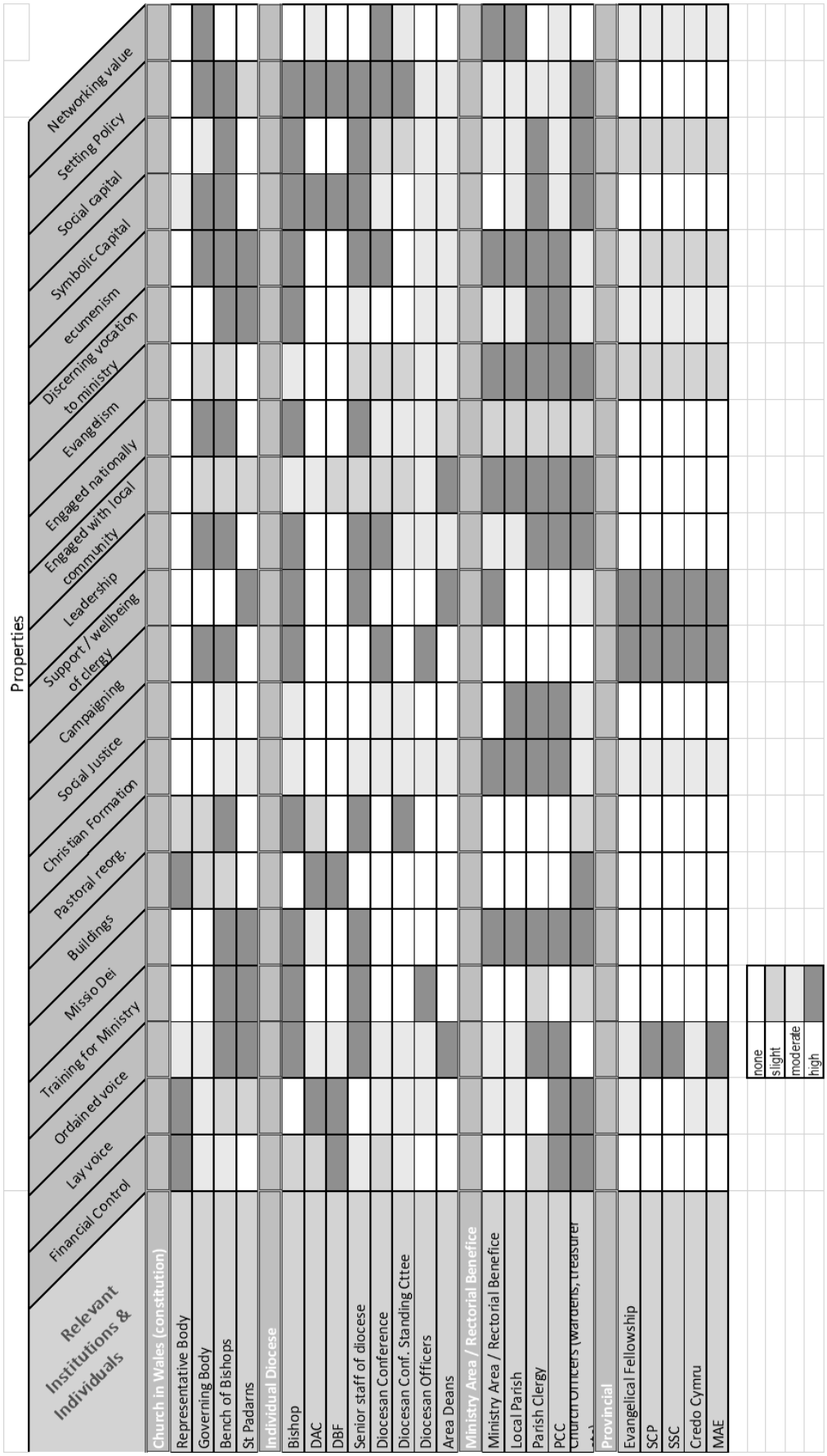
Professor Rob Warner
Chair of the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee

cc: Dr Wayne Morris

Appendix F: Quirkos workspace



Appendix G: Field Analysis



Appendix H: Ministry Team Covenant

- We recognise that in our working together under God we share in the “cure of souls” shared with us by the Bishop of the Diocese
- We commit ourselves to working at relationships of trust, respect and accountability and to support one another by
    - Honouring our human differences and the gifts that God has given to each of us
    - Graciously speaking well of one another in a spirit of love, generosity and forgiveness.
    - Praying for one another
    - Encouraging one another to develop and grow as Christian disciples and as Christian ministers called to lead the people of God.
    - Allowing one another space for privacy
    - Ensuring that each of us takes time for rest and recreation
    - Being clear about our expectations and hopes when we encounter difficulties or feel that something is amiss.
- As a team we will pay particular attention to the learning needs of those who are new to ministry by giving support, time for study, and recognising the additional demands of diocesan and Provincial training programmes for the newly ordained and licensed.
- We commit ourselves to being learners and will be involved in Diocesan and Provincial CMD as well as other learning opportunities.
- In our pastoral work we recognise that there are occasions when “the seal of the confessional” must be kept. However, in general we hold to a notion of shared confidentiality within the ministry team.
- In our staff meetings we will cover the following agenda items
    - Pastoral needs
    - Forthcoming marriages, Baptisms and funerals
    - Planning for the liturgical year
    - Working with the PCC and its committees
    - Ecumenical relationships
    - Schools work
    - Reflective practice and team development – away days e.g.
    - Training needs of the newly ordained / licensed
- Praying together
    - Morning prayer at Holy Cross on Tuesdays and Thursdays and at Llanblethian on Wednesdays
        - We will review this in the light of changes to our day off and other needs.
- Collaborative working, authority and accountability
    - We will endeavour to share our work as colleagues and equals seeking to complement one another’s gifts and skills.
    - We also recognise the authority structure of the Rectorial Benefice and will work to ensure that this is an enabling structure – in particular, we will be careful about the use of power and endeavour to hold to a spirit of healthy service of one another.

- Relationship to the PCC and Churches of the benefice
    - With regard to all of the above we will work to avoid a sense of the ministry team vs. the PCC and strive to make our working practices a model for others to follow.

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